THE CITY OF PERFECTION

THOMAS L. MASSON

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THE CITY OF PERFECTION

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THE CITY OF PERFECTION

BY

THOMAS L. MASSON

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The three great illusions: 1. That we live externally, not internally. 2. That we are guilty. 3. That others are real.

The three great disillusions: 1. Money. 2. Intellect. 3. Women.

The seven great desires: Hunger, Lust, Physical Comfort, Intellectual Cleverness, Money, Display, Fame.

The seven states to spiritual progress: Innocence, Conscience, Government, Promise, Law, Grace, Kingdom.

For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions I found an altar with this inscription TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him I declare unto you. Acts 17. 23.

And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Zion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.

Rev. 14: 1.

Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.

Ps. 2: 6.

They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever.

Ps. 125: 1.

But ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels.

Heb. 12: 22.

READERS!

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

Hamlet.

He that judges without informing himself to the utmost that he is capable, cannot acquit himself of judging amiss.

John Locke.

Our sole duty in this life is to try constantly to be better. The real difficulty with too many is that they have no invisible means of support. Too many have the habit of dismissing anything they don't know as if its truth were unalterably established.

The controversy about what makes us think, what makes us suffer, and why it is that we know whether we think or suffer, goes on incessantly.

Humanity is constantly reasserting itself in new terms. What I communicate to you and you understand you have already possessed. The combined agonies of the ages have created an illusion that all suffering is inevitable, when it is only a stage in progress. Discord, from which comes suffering, is not natural. Let us rise and conquer this giant of despair. In the true spiritual life, joy is normal.

There is much less difference than you realize between the believer and the unbeliever, who believes more than he is ever willing to admit, while the believer, similarly, has moments of doubt, loss of faith, indeed absolute negation.

During such moments I have seen men curse God, throw their Bibles out of the window, and revert to animalism. These moments, black as night, are experienced by every one in greater or lesser degree; they pass rapidly, like sudden squalls.

When faith evaporates, and perhaps a crisis in your affairs takes the life out of you, remember first not to be afraid to repudiate or doubt anything; throw overboard every notion you have. Retracing your previous steps, go back to your Creator. There only can you rest, because there alone are you convinced of anything. You must believe that you came from a higher intelligence than you are. Have it out with that source. Pray, argue, do anything you like with that source. Your humility is the key to your ultimate understanding. Little by little you will come back feeling for solid ground with each step; and as you do come back, your faith will gradually and more firmly be reëstablished in countless ways, through books, friends, experiences, nay, even your so-called enemies. I mention this at once because so many have come to me expressing their secret doubts,

and thinking that in this respect they were exceptions. Every one doubts. Never be afraid to doubt so long as you push on trying to find the truth, and never regret anything. Nothing can get you permanently if you bear in mind these two rules.

Practically, a large part of our troubles come either from over-petting those near us by deliberate intention, or from permitting them to attach themselves to us, thus compelling us to over-pet them. Forgetting that we did not create them, we make ourselves responsible for their actions, weakening both them and ourselves. The world is roughly divided into two groups: those who hold up others, and those who are being held up by others. Family tragedies breed from this error.

As for those unbelieving friends whose attention is suddenly arrested by the things of the spirit and who have hitherto been either indifferent or frankly scornful, two thoughts come.

One is that to them the exploited life of the spirit (if for the moment they allow that it is true) seems to be full of inconvenience. The genuine spiritual people appear to be great sufferers. Many have been martyrs. Apparently their main purpose is to get rid of their possessions, or else restrict them. They are always going through a process of adjustment. In short, they don't seem to be very happy.

Their true tranquillity is not always outwardly revealed. When they seem to be happy, they are the kind with whom nobody wants to associate—complacent, smug, evangelical.

The other thought is the appalling variety of spiritual uplifters and healers who assure us that if their limited system is adopted all will be well. No wonder that, between these two extremes, the unbelieving inquirer is bewildered.

Any man who poses as even an amateur Messiah can gain a respectable following.

The commercialization of Christianity, and its exploitation by those who practise it openly without understanding it, have done more to set it back than the combined influence of all the unbelievers in the world.

Some religious, spiritual, or just plain healing cults announce truth with an uncanny smoothness. But underneath their message is a subtle appeal to the pocketbook. Many of them, it is true, are not only sincere, but often do temporary good by lifting a sense of trouble from the mind, giving a larger view of life. Practically all of these cults, however, lean too much to crass sentimentality. There is no just-as-good-as substitute for courage, character, and self-discipline. Each one of us absolutely holds domin-

ion over the world in proportion as he makes good with his higher self.

In order that the way may be clear and the key-note of this book sounded, the following truths should be pondered.

Through each individual alone can his or her destiny be determined. What you wish to know about God or your own happiness or unhappiness, your mortality or immortality, can be determined only by yourself. You can depend upon nobody else. If you join a church, this decision rests with you. Or if you have been brought up in any church, your decision to remain there, or whatever your conduct is, must always rest with you. Your decision, naturally, may be the result of a combination of racial heredity and educational mass-consciousness, acting thus upon your will-to-live, but practically this does n't matter. We are not here concerned with subtle psychological distinctions.

There is much in psychology that is interesting but little that is not superficial to minds tuned into metaphysical thinking. The process of sublimation upon which psychoanalysists lay so much stress is merely a mental-material way of diverting thought from one channel into another. From our point of view this

is simply a new and inferior way of repeating the First Commandment: Thou shalt have no other gods but me. It means that we shall turn from lower to higher things. The psychologists offer one substitute for another, and in the end all substitutes fail. God is not a substitute. Why deal in by-products?

The real danger of "being carried about with divers and strange doctrines," as the writer of Hebrews suggests, is that when you get outside of the main channels through which the religious consciousness of the race has so long come to express itself, you lose your true direction and become a spiritual hypochondriac. I love all heretics, and it is through my own spiritual vagabondage that I have got whatever light I now have. The liberty of Christ scorned all repressions. All this is true enough. But there are too many cases, right before our eyes, of both men and women of weak character and infantile intelligence, who succumb to any new antinomianism or Pelagian creed that the fancy religions breed, and they think they can override all custom and commit any excess with impunity. These low-minded people do great harm, because in the eyes of unbelievers they discredit real spiritual thinking. They use Paul's words (Rom. 8: 1), "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus," as if this gave them the right even to

murder, forgetting that he added, "who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." We must obey our own God as our experience (often so painful) teaches us to know his presence. Conduct is everything. The rule is absolute; namely, to replace a sense of the transient with a sense of the permanent. This is true sublimation. Thus we rise above desire. And a pity it is that within the great churches there is seemingly so little for the seeker, so much that is material, emotional, sanctimonious, stagy, mawkish, pretentious, evangelical, and downright vulgar, and so little that invites us to a genuine spiritual awareness.

It is quite true, of course, that the emergence from the material dream of existence into this life of the spirit may seem distressing. We cannot well cast off temporal things, and replace them with permanent things, without pain. But making due allowance for this inevitable adjustment, the change is not nearly so abrupt or cruel as it seems. In looking backward, it is quite apparent that past agonies had no lasting reality. True, the memory of those we have lost here lingers, but this is often more consoling than otherwise. And elusive Time is kind enough to blot out all forms of suffering—grief, poverty, ill health, and so forth. Those who learn to bear crosses derive therefrom a higher joy. The compensations we

get, as we move along, growing out of losses and griefs, is always more than adequate, and in many cases it is immediate. Where it is not immediate and we have to endure, we come to learn later that this very endurance was a highly necessary and salutary thing, only incidental to our total life experience.

When we come to see that the Spirit leads a conscious life of its own—even more than this, that it is all—then we rise above fear, which is a form of spiritual unintelligence.

Then the tumult and the shouting of those unbelievers no longer appal or distress us. In the words of Coleridge, they are ignorant of our understanding, while we understand their ignorance. We do not patronize or necessarily pity them, because we know that their real selves know, and for us their false selves no longer have any reality.

The soul is static. Realization of this truth is a great leveler and steadier of external affairs. There is no possible way of getting a correct understanding of God except by striving for it constantly. It is very much like searching for gold in a placer-mine. The mark of our progress is revealed when we begin to be grateful for spiritual things and not for material things.

Coveteousness is so destructive because it is carnally personal; that is, it considers no one but the

fleeting, transitory, material self. When we come to regard with an ever broadening gratitude our material possessions not as our own creation, but as the true gift of God, to be used for permanent results, we have learned the greatest lesson of all. We are detached yet unlimited in our equipment. We are truly trustees.

Primarily, it is our attitude that counts, so far as our responsibility and our victory over the world are concerned. What we do, practically and actually, is determined by our previous attitude. This truth is conveyed to us by Jesus when he said, "The son can do nothing of himself but what he seeth the Father do." (The word "seeth" here means understanding.) Thus our sole business is not to act but to understand how God acts. When we limit ourselves to material possessions we limit ourselves by so much. Our attitude should be universal and not particular.

The fact that everything is demonstrated and determined in thought is such a mathematical certainty that it can be checked up in the same way that a road-map can be traced back to the place where one came from. And if everything about us is the result of thought, then it must be evident that in case of imperfections or limitations they can be healed by thought. It is an interesting but as yet unproved material demonstration, advanced by some scientists,

that all thought is nothing but electrons. It may be so. We do not know.

I know, however, by experience constantly widening, that there is a universal mind, but I cannot prove this to any one but myself because the terms are lacking. Do not, however, dismiss the idea. Wait. Merely because you do not understand chess, don't think there isn't such a thing as chess.

It is just as positive and certain as anything in the whole universe of consciousness, that the gradual entrance into the life of the spirit carries with it an ever increasing power which words cannot define. And this sense of ascendancy or harmony is entirely devoid of any trace of sentimentality, morbidity, fanaticism, sob-stuff, evangelism, pollyanna, or any of those human vulgarities which real people shrink from. Perhaps the best way in which the change can be described is to say that we are offered (on our own terms, but subject to the most rigid standards conceivable) the very highest form of intelligence there is—no less than the infinite. We become thus partners with God or the Universal Mind. We do not, however, become demigods merely for the asking, nor in any sense superior, because in the spiritual world there is never any question of offensive precedence. But we do come into possession of an entirely new and infinite set of terms—which are de-

veloped within us gradually—and which enable us to rise above all material considerations. Paul expresses it in this way in the eighth chapter of Romans (v. 18) and the second chapter of First Corinthians (v. 9). While Paul uses the future tense in his first statement, in actual experience the result is immediate.

Here let me note the difference between the scholar and the student. In themselves scholars are rarely creative. They bear the same relation to progress that bookkeepers and accountants do to business. They are necessary as recorders. But the difference between the great scholar and the little scholar is one of data alone. We must all be students of life, but no reliance can be placed upon any formula. True knowledge comes not from taking in but from giving out. When we learn to distribute spiritual gifts we know then what it really means to know. While scholarship may not be necessary to enhance true knowledge, indeed, on the material plane it is highly important that men should know what they are talking about. For example in the celebrated Scopes trial in Tennessee, Mr. W. J. Bryan, in answer to an inquiry about the extent of his knowledge, replied in effect that he knew nothing but Christianity, as that was good enough for him. Mr. Bryan's error seems to have been that he insisted upon dealing with the ma-

terial and intellectual world upon its own chosen terms and then in his being forced to acknowledge his unfamiliarity with those terms. This is worse than bad logic; it is bad spiritual thinking. It is equivalent to insisting upon playing golf with an expert when you have never swung a golf-club. Now a man may be a good athlete even if not a good golf player, but he undermines his influence over others fatally when he limits the test to an activity with which he is not familiar. But how rare indeed is natural intelligence, even among the great, since Alexander killed one of his best friends when that friend refused to join in the adoration of Alexander as a divinity!

As for the abstract formula, it can be expressed in the following terms:

The first necessity is to remove yourself as much as possible into the region of pure thought.

As all things are determined by your thought, pure or dematerialized thought, expressed by the higher mathematics, must be separated from impure thought. In short, before you can make a beginning at all, you must cast out the world, the fleeting, give up your possessions, that is your thought-attachments to material things, personalities, etc.

It is a fundamental proposition that in order to arrive at the truth about anything, the whole must

first be conceived and not any one of its parts. You cannot reach completeness by beginning with incompleteness. Hitch your wagon to a star. Just as in algebra is laid down the hypothesis that x equals an unknown quantity, so, in the search for truth, you must lay down the hypothesis that the whole is greater than any of its parts. The whole of anything is always the unknown quantity, but in no other way than by using the idea of the whole as a starting-point can you arrive at even any considerable part of the truth.

The mere acquiescence in anything short of perfection limits us in proportion to the limitation.

Limitation is the inability to perceive anything but a fraction of the truth.

This does not in any sense belittle the importance of inductive reasoning, to which (research and the accumulation of data) modern science owes its growth. But without deduction, which must inevitably lead the way, induction would be less than a good servant. We must vision before we act. The two go together.

The value of accumulated knowledge lies in the fact that it enables the seeker to stand upon this temporary platform, while he reaches out beyond. It helps him to enlarge the limits of his imagination. Without Aristotle, no Bacon. Without Galileo, no Newton. Without Newton, no Einstein. Under-

stand, please, the spiritual thinker does not undervalue world knowledge, but it does not confuse him, because in the profound depths of his own soul he finds the source of all things. He postulates God, at first timidly, until, through the light of revelation (there seems to be no better word or any other material way in which this can be explained), he *feels* God in his soul. Then, little by little, his spiritual experience builds up within him, by a process similar to that by which world-knowledge accumulates, a foundation of faith. This faith is of course constantly augmented as his experience grows. How else is it possible for me to explain this process?—a process perfectly well understood by those who have undergone it and—apparently—wholly misunderstood, or wholly unknown to those who have not undergone it.

What the intellectual too often does not see is this, that if an idea is restricted it fails by so much, for we cannot create an idea which is true unless in its application it is unlimited. "All roads lead to Rome." That is, all right thinking must lead to God —the Whole. Exclusiveness of any sort is an acknowledgment of a certain inferiority.

The two most strikingly opposite traits in human nature are gregariousness and exclusiveness.

Gregariousness impels men to herd together. Ex-

clusiveness impels them to become separate. The exclusives are the high-brows, aristocrats, specialists, hermits, mystics. Still, even here, we see the tendency to herd. Mystics congregate in monasteries. Aristocrats have their "circles." Two hermits, living a few miles apart, will visit each other upon occasions.

To break the inherent claim of exclusiveness and lift the mind up to the plane of the universal is apparently the task of the ages.

It is stated that in Greece in the fourth century B. C. not five men had been able to conceive of anything beyond urban selfishness. Athens split on this rock. That any self-sustaining city should consider anything but its own interests was unthinkable.

The Hebrews, surrounded by nations who sustained themselves by group-gods, evolved the idea of one God—a tribal deity, but Himself alone. It took Amos, Isaiah, and the men who wrote the book of Jonah to reach out beyond the exclusiveness of the tribal god and dare to think that God was for all men. Nothing but a bolt of lightning (revelation) could have made Paul stretch his spiritual imagination beyond the Sanhedrin and comprehend that Christ died for all men, Gentile and Jew alike.

This idea, that there is one infinite creator, and that all men, irrespective of race or religion, are born spiritually equal, has been slowly but surely seeping

through the human consciousness since the time of Abraham. It is even expressed in the intensely materialistic theory of internationalism; it is broadly indicated in the somewhat popular phrase, "brotherhood of man." As science and exploration bring closer together the peoples of the earrth, so that race prejudice and the narrow patriotism of geographical exclusiveness melt into world consciousness, we shall expect to see universal peace—if, within the recurrent upheavals of the human consciousness such a thing is ever possible.

Language is but one form of expression, and not the highest. Glibness in self-expression through words is almost invariably a sign of ignorance. The big writers wrote painfully. Many modern writers who spiritually impoverished are forced to exploit their personalities for the alleged benefit of the crowd. Of necessity much that they write turns and rends them, constituting a satire upon their so-called art.

The whole history of philosophy and psychology concerns itself with what is the last style in words. It is not thinking that counts but unfoldment.

Having succeeded by an effort of the soul (the result of meditation and concentration) in placing yourself in this region of pure thought referred to, you must then select a symbol which will serve as a foundation-stone. Only one symbol can thus be

used; that is, one which expresses the whole. Let us take for a symbol the word "Totality." For it is better just now to select a word which has had no previous association with creeds or traditions. This means practically the same as "Creator," or the source of one's being. You develop this image internally, as you like.

Totality expresses the idea of the whole. Anything less than totality is imperfect. Totality must be perfect, for otherwise it would not be totality. Nothing can possibly be admitted within the abstract conception of Totality which is short of the whole of Totality.

Still other words which express Totality are "Perfection," "All," "Harmony." The word "God" abstractly expresses Totality, but it has often been degraded by writers to express animalism; that is, it has been limited so that its abstract meaning of perfection has been vitiated. But as the religious faith in the human consciousness expands, that is, responds gradually to the ONE SOURCE, then the word "God" becomes more and more a universal symbol. I shall continue to use it in this way. I am sure you will understand its real meaning as I thus use it. Indeed, divested of all of its traditional incompleteness, God means everything; it is both personal and impersonal, Love, Truth, Infinite Intelligence. But now,

for the moment, let us hold the thought that anything which is a whole or Totality must be unaware of itself. It is essential to understand this truth as an attribute of our God; therefore, meditate on it until the understanding comes. Being absolutely complete, Perfection or Totality cannot possibly be aware of anything outside of itself. There is no such thing.

Without constant running comparisons, we would have no consciousness. This consciousness (awareness) comes from the contrast between opposing sensation (thoughts). The very conditions of our earthly existence therefore depend upon our always entertaining as an idea this thought of Totality, while at the same time we are limited by contrast to a finite sense of things. Between these two opposing states of consciousness are we aware of anything.

Our progress consists entirely of *increasing* the sense of Totality, while *diminishing* the sense of imperfection or incompleteness.

There is nothing known but the unknown. The understanding of this truth recreates the universe. Until we are willing to make a complete surrender, and place our absolute reliance upon God the unknown, we shall meet with discord. But when, through the seven stages of spiritual progress, or dispensations (Innocence, Conscience, Human Government, Promise, Law, Grace, and Kingdom), we get

this understanding, then our real possessions are constant and increasing. And as we cast out our sense of guilt and rise above the material attachments that before seemed so necessary, we not only get a correspondingly wider view, but those things come back to us in a new light.

Nothing in this world pays such big returns as self-denial. Yet, strange to say, this self-denial, as we proceed, is unaccompanied by any strain. We relinquish much, as, in an airplane, the earth seems to slip away from us without effort.

From the practical standpoint our whole duty is to maintain ourselves while we are here with as little annoyance to others as possible.

The way lies strictly through Faith, Hope, and Love, of which more hereafter.

Our ultimate victory over the world, or, to put it more definitely, our happiness and spiritual well-being, depend entirely upon our power to hold the thought of Perfection, of Totality. When we finally become so that we constantly dwell in the presence of Totality (God) we shall then experience no sorrows. We shall be the victims of no accidents. We shall move serene and tranquil in a world of fleeting images. Love, Truth, Wisdom, shall be ours. We care not what others say, because, for us, this works. We know.

This conquest is not easy, never completed. It lies solely in our own thought, and the result is determined by ourselves alone, our courage, persistence, humility, obedience, and self-denial.

The main object of this book is to show how this result can be obtained, not for our own selfish purposes, because we cannot consider our own personal convenience, but for real permanence. It is presented upon the assumption that all of us, even if we may not realize it, are citizens of an Invisible City of Perfection. To the student-reader who is interested will be gradually unfolded the whole idea of the spiritual life.

It is perhaps superfluous to add, for the benefit of learned readers, that in the following pages will be found echoes of Plato (Idealism), Kant (the Categorical Imperative), Descartes (the Individual), Spinoza (the Universal God), Schopenhauer (the Will to Believe), Spencer (the Unknowable), William James (Pragmatism), and other seers. But the fact is that all philosophers are agreed in the main, or tend toward ultimate unity, and that it would scarcely be possible for two intelligent men to talk for an hour on life and death without suggesting, if not elaborating upon, all of the problems of the universe, as the human consciousness suggests them.

INTRODUCTION

Is this the city that men call The perfection of beauty, The joy of the whole earth? *Lam.* 2: 15.

Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King. *Ps.* 48: 2.

Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God. Selah. *Ps.* 87: 3.

The idea for this book came from a reading of St. Augustine's "City of God," in connection with the fact that the actual location of Zion, the City of David, is still a matter of dispute among the authorities.

It came suddenly, as a startling and dramatic thought, that although, after all these years, the site of Zion is in doubt, the City of Perfection, as a permanent spiritual habitation, is one of the great realities.

Here in sharp contrast we have the uselessness of material disputations and the permanence of that invisible reality, the Great City of the Great King, which

now, more than ever before, is uniting men and women all over the world in a common citizenship.

Although we may not realize it, we are all of us inhabitants of this City of Perfection. Out of David's material conquest of Jerusalem, which seems to have been so vain, grew in the religious consciousness of the Hebrews this great conception of the eternal Zion, the beautiful City of Perfection. The Zionist movement of to-day is a part of this ideal, which has carried on now so long.

To Gentile and to Jew this supreme spiritual contribution to the common thought of humanity has persisted, until, as Science has enabled the inhabitants of the world to communicate with one another so rapidly, and as a slowly dawning but constantly growing religious consciousness is making us all see there is so much more to life than the material living of it, so this universal City of Perfection is now becoming a great reality.

This book consists of a series of essays, all with a common aim; namely, to show what it means to be a citizen of this great city. As we are all coming to understand more and more, while life is certainly practical and severe enough on its material side, it really consists of states of consciousness; and in as simple a manner as possible, without the use of any formal or technical terms, I have tried to indicate

what these states of consciousness are, in their direct application to our daily problems. In doing this, I have tried to show that our common citizenship in this Great City of David makes us regal. We are truly sons and daughters of an ever living and ever present God. It gives us something more to live for than our own brief lives.

While this book is inspired somewhat by Augustine's work, it should be understood that it is non-sectarian. It is for everybody, irrespective of formal creeds.

It remains to indicate, as briefly as possible, how the idea for this book grew and to give some of the authorities. It is possible that my readers may be interested enough in these sources to go over the ground more intimately than has been done in this summary. I can assure them all that so far as I myself am concerned, the excitement and fascination of this pursuit was much greater than mere words can tell. In the Bible there are more than one hundred and fifty references to Zion (or Sion). Also, all through the history of Christianity, there are innumerable intimations and side-tracks, all of which come back in some manner to this common ideal.

Augustine (354–430) begins his book thus:

> That most glorious society and celestial city of God's faithful, which is partly seated in the course of these declin-

ing times, wherein he that liveth by faith (Hab. 11) is a pilgrim amongst the wicked; and partly in that solid state of eternity, which as yet the other part doth patiently expect, until "righteousness be turned into judgment," being then by the proper excellence to obtain the last victory, and be crowned in perfection of peace; have I undertaken to defend in this work; which I intend unto you (my dearest Marcelline) as being your due by my promise, and exhibit it against all those that prefer their false gods before this city's founder: the work is great and difficult, but God the Master of all difficulties is our helper.

Of Augustine's book that eminent American scholar, Rufus M. Jones, in his "Studies of Mystical Religion" thus writes:

While Rome was being sacked by hordes of barbarians, and the empire was tottering before the irresistible onset of races of vast potential power, St. Augustine, in his African retreat, was working out a new imperial system—a City of God—compared to which the old empire even under the greatest Cæsars, was a slender affair. St. Augustine's theology made the Church—the City of God as it now is on the earth—the only door to the City of God as it is to be in the heavens. To Augustine the theologian, man as man was a depraved being, corrupt, root and branch-ruined, lost, possessed of nothing of his own which could minister to his salvation. The Church, with its mysterious sacraments, was an indispensable channel of Divine Grace. In a world of sin and ignorance and error, in a world where no man could find any salvation for himself, it had pleased God

to found and construct a City of Refuge, through which one might flee into the City of Eternal Rest.

It is perhaps unnecessary for me to state, with due respect for one of the world's great mystics and constructive religious minds, that this book, as defective as it may be, and as far below "The City of God" as it must be, is not limited within the confines of one church. It is a book for Man the Mystic, for the Individual, for the total spiritual consciousness of the Individual, rather than for any special phase of that Consciousness, which may be indicated by a particular creed. This certainly does not mean that it ignores or repudiates any creed whatsoever, only that it is above and beyond systems, and aims only to reveal the limitless possibilities of universal love, as indicated by Christ: "On these two commandments [love thy God and love thy neighbor] hang all the law and the prophets."

It now remains for me only to give a few of the sources.

Baedeker's guide-book:

Tradition places Zion and the City of David upon the west hill of Jerusalem, but the references in the Bible clearly show this to be an error. The Temple must certainly have stood upon the E. hill. But "going up" to the Temple from the City of David is usually spoken of (2 Sam. XXLV, 18)

so that the city cannot have stood upon the W. hill which is higher than the hill of the Temple. Its site must therefore be looked for upon the E. hill.

Hastings's "Dictionary of the Bible" (Scribner):

. . . the site of Jerusalem is divided into four quarters, each on its own hill. These hills are traditionally named Acra, Bezetha, Zion and Ophel . . . it must be noticed carefully at the outset that around these names the fiercest discussions have raged, many of which are not within sight of settlement. . . .

If the indentification of the Jebusite City with Ophel be admitted, we cannot fail to identify it also with the "City of David," in which he dwelt. (2 Sam. 5: 9.) But when we read further that David "built round about from Millo and inward" we are perplexed by our total ignorance as to what Millo may have been, and where it may have been situated.

"American Encyclopedia":

The name of the acropolis of the Jebusites, taken by David, who made it his residence and strengthened and extended it. Christian tradition has located Zion upon the western and higher of the two hills on which Jerusalem is built, and this view is still adhered to by some scholars . . . In course of time the name Zion lost its narrower significance, and, in the prophets, often stands for Jerusalem, while "daughter of Zion" means the Jewish people.

Peake's "Commentary":

Zion is usually held to have occupied part of the eastern of the two hills covered by the modern city. . . .

The Glories of the New Jerusalem. The prophet (Isaiah LX 1–22) taking for his standpoint the fulfillment of his prediction, pictures as accomplished Zion's coming glories.

From "The Companion Bible":

That Zion (Heb) or Sion (Greek) was "The City of David" is clear from 2 Sam. 5: 7. That Ophel and Zion are equivalent names applied to the highest point or mound of the hill ridge running due south from Mount Moriah is now generally conceded.

That Zion was the name of the original Jebusite fortress on this summit, almost directly above Gihon (now known as "the Virgin's Fount") is also accepted by the majority of authorities on the topography of Jerusalem.

It therefore becomes necessary to readjust some of the place-names which have given to a Zion on the west side of Jerusalem on traditional accounts (which from the time of Josephus onwards, have located Zion on the south-western hill of the city) and to transfer them to the Zion south of Mount Moriah.

This readjustment will transfer the name of the true site and satisfy the requirements of fulfilled prophecy, which declares that "Zion shall be ploughed as a field" (Jer. 28: Is. Micah 3:12).

Professor R. A. S. Macalister, leader of the joint expedition sent out by the Palestine Exploration Fund

and the "London Daily Telegraph," is confident that Millo has now been identified, by a series of coincidences which he declares are conclusive. He writes:

> In the absence of inscriptions, none of which have come to light, I venture to say that these coincidences constitute the strongest possible argument in favor of the claim that Millo has been discovered.

This would undoubtedly solve one of the greatest problems in Biblical history if it could be proved beyond all doubt. We can, however, prove it in our own lives, spiritually, which is of the greater importance.

The quotations I have given could be indefinitely extended, but even if in the reading they have already wearied my readers, I have deemed it important to give them, in order to show confusion among authorities when it comes to agreeing about any material thing.

As soon, however, as we leave the material and enter into the spiritual conception of the City of Perfection, we are at once dealing with spiritual realities. Of course here there are differences in terms, but all through the Bible and all through the literature of religion, this single thought is closely adhered to, of the city in which all men dwell in spirit.

In our daily lives, as we advance in spiritual un-

derstanding, it is not necessary for us to adhere closely to the terms used to express this great ideal. We come to understand quite well that these terms must be symbolic, and all that we need do is to carry the idea in our own minds, while at the same time it really grows up out of our own trials, our own experience from day to day.

One of the great and intensely modern conceptions in psychology to-day is that if we wish to be successful in any direction we must first create an ideal. Thus, according to this progressive idea, a man who wishes to become a public speaker learns that if he first mentally visualizes in advance the kind of audience he will address, a very large part of his problem is solved, because the actual, concrete audience he does address presents only a group of masks to his view, whereas his visualization enables him to get behind the masks in his speaking, and thus gain a greater power. This simple rule of psychology has always applied to success in any field of action. We create ideals first, and then unconsciously, automatically, and progressively tend to realize them.

As the inhabitants of the world are drawn more closely together this conception of an invisible City of Perfection is certain to grow.

In the twenty-first chapter of Revelation, beginning with, "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem,

coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband," is a description in apocalyptic language of this City of Perfection.

If the reader will also turn to the fifteenth Psalm, he will read a description of the perfect man, that is to say, of the Real Citizen of the City of Perfection. This Psalm, by the way, is linked up by a writer in "The Companion Bible" with the Sermon on the Mount. This anonymous writer—or one closely allied with him—suggests that there are seven times, or dispensations, and that at present we are living in the period of Grace, by which is meant that Faith is greater than works. However, it is perhaps best to quote here his actual words:

> Much of what we read in the Psalms is truth *for all time,* but some things are peculiar to that Dispensation of Law, and are neither suitable nor appropriate for the present Dispensation of Grace. That is why many readers stumble when they judge "the imprecatory Psalms" from the standpoint of grace. Those Psalms were appropriate for the past Dispensation of works, as they will be for the coming Dispensation of Judgment; but they are not appropriate for the present Dispensation, in which God's administration is on the principles of grace (according to Matt. 5: 44–48). It was true, in the former Dispensation of Law, that "when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive" (Ezek. 18: 27). But that is

not the way of salvation now. The Scriptures for this present Dispensation are written and contained in the Pauline Epistles (fulfilling the promise of the Lord in John 16: 13); and these declare with one voice that we are not saved by works, but by grace. (Rom. 3: 23–24; 11: 6. Eph. 2: 3–9. Titus 3: 5–8.)

I think it will be understood that these quotations I have made, and sources I have indicated, are entirely without prejudice and merely presented in order that the reader may understand in the beginning the trend of my book.

As the reader will also see, if he now cares to dip further into the following pages, my sole aim is to stimulate people to think for themselves and not take for granted any particular program or system. In doing this, I have naturally and inevitably drawn upon my own practical life experience, without deep scholarship or any particular desire to instruct, but only with the thought of opening the gates for all to the City of Perfection. I have purposely avoided burdening the reader with too many foot notes or sources, but refer him to the bibliography at the end, which fairly covers all disputed questions from the standpoint of advanced scholarship. Where my own conclusions seem at variance with accepted authorities, they are not made without due deliberation, and are based on my own direct thought and experience.

THE CITY OF PERFECTION

THE CITY OF PERFECTION

CHAPTER I

THE NEW RELIGION

It is a mistake to suppose that religion is static. The medieval practices and penances of the mystics have been largely discarded. As it is realized that we do not love God in a carnal manner, the sex motive in religion has been toned down. The wrath of God is even slowly disappearing from the Prayer Book.

The habit of referring everything to the past, ingrained with all scholars and so-called thinkers, is second nature; so that it is practically impossible to get a correct opinion on any subject based upon first-hand knowledge of life as it is lived to-day.

The difference between reading to improve the mind and reading to improve the soul is the difference between earth and heaven. The first has no more validity than learning chess or bridge. The second recreates us on a constantly ascending scale.

If any one doubts this, let him read any book which aims to enlighten us. He will discover that

the author has a set of pet authorities; if he does not quote these authorities directly, his thought can easily be traced to their influence by any one who, even superficially, has been over the same ground. To arrive at any measure of truth, knowledge at first hand must take precedence over book-learning.

What we are all concerned about, in living the New Religion, is not what anybody else thought or thinks to-day, but what we can come to understand directly by first-hand knowledge of the infinite.

We are not here concerned with theories of life but with life itself. We are directly concerned with the problem of support, with marriage, with the raising of children, with daily conduct, with health, in short with every possible aspect of practical life itself.

We enter this life naked, and we go out of it naked. In between is what concerns us. It is fair to assume that whether we believe in a future life or not, whatever that future life is will be largely determined by how we live in this one. We seek God at first hand.

So far as our conduct in this life is concerned, it is not necessary for us to believe in a future life at all. We know, as a practical proposition—or at least we learn rapidly by bitter experience—that if we do certain things, and if we neglect certain others, we must reap the consequences.

In order to attain immortality it is necessary for us to perform daily dissolutions.

There are laws and rules here that we cannot disobey without paying the penalty. It does not take the reading of many books on morals or philosophy to make us see that if we are going to get the most out of life we must not commit excesses, we must act with courtesy and good nature. I write now from the material sense-standpoint.

The world, which was wound up and set going before we came, presents us with this much as a code. It has taken the world a long time to learn even this simple code—much bloodshed. It is not a perfect code, but it is one which we are easily made to understand. If we ride out recklessly in a motor-car and smash into other people, we are made to suffer the just punishment.

There are some people who never understand this code. They do not possess what we may call natural or protective intelligence (common sense). They flounder about; if they disobey the law, society, in the shape of uniformed officials, grabs them and locks them up where they can do no further harm. This is right from our world's point of view. Personally I am a stern believer in material law.

Indeed in general it may be said that the majority of people get the idea of law and order very quickly.

They are instructed, even if imperfectly, by their parents or guardians, and, being what is termed normal, they manage to restrain their natural animal tendencies so that they keep out of jail.

A small portion of them, who have genius or talent, or something within them which makes them long to be better, pass their lives in trying to make the world better and to serve as an example to those who come after them. But whatever happens, or however they may be formed, it is broadly true that this world is an orderly world, except when it gets too much out of hand; and the main intention on the part of all is to make it as decent a place to live in as possible for all concerned. This, I repeat, is the main intention, although it is needless to say that this intention is often put aside, especially when war breaks through and passions are aroused on a grand scale.

But, naturally, if one is to succeed at all in this world, quite early in life one must get the main idea of law and order; and it follows that such an individual, who takes a real interest, will inevitably saturate himself with what is called the best thought of the world. He will go back into history, learn the lives of the great men who have gone before, get the opinion of all the best men, and from the incidents and panorama unfolded will thus acquire a code of

his own, this code being superimposed upon the code which the world holds. It will be as much of the world code as he has been able to assimilate, tempered and refined and modified or extended by his own individual temperament and thought. This I think is a fair presentation of the attitude of the average scholar and world well-wisher.

When we read the words of any great man, we do not look up his age or his habits. We recognize their truth out of our own lives. Yet there are many people who pride themselves on their intelligence who declare, because there is a dispute about the Virgin Birth, or about the number of minds the words of Christ passed through before they were printed, that they cannot be true.

According to the New Religion I am now advocating, all this code of the world must be abandoned. I do not for a moment mean to convey that it must be abandoned for good. But before any individual can find himself and stand upon his own ground, he must of necessity first cast aside everything but the one fact that he is now living amid conditions which he must meet, himself, at first-hand, and not be influenced by any other considerations but his own immediate response to them. It may be asked, how can he possibly do this if he has no knowledge of history, or at least refuses to let it enter into his actions?

My reply is that it is not possible for him not to have any knowledge of history, because the very conditions which give him the material to make his decision are filled with history. He cannot act without knowing how to talk and read and write. He is no mystic; he is a man. He is no seer; he is strictly bound by the rules of the game, and these rules presuppose a certain set of symbols, which we call words, and these words are saturated with background. He cannot go anywhere or see any one without coming into contact with the past. If he travels through any city, he will see the remains of old houses which remind him of past generations. If he picks up a newspaper, tucked away somewhere he will find a learned if fragmentary discourse on some phase of the world's history. The past is always present; it is a part of the present. He cannot look into the faces of human beings anywhere without seeing the same noses which appear silhouetted on the surface of obelisks. The Hittites are all about us. Pharaoh sits next to us in the trolley. Charlemagne serves us at the smart restaurant. Henry VIII walks the department-store aisle and ushers us to our counter. Thotmes II regales us with the latest witticisms.

The New Religion repudiates nothing; it accepts everything equally. But it relegates all things to their proper perspective.

It says to the sense of guilt, "Get thee behind me, Satan."

The mission of Christ was to render the abstract idea of Totality into human values. This philosophical or ethical abstraction had hitherto been variously conceived by the Indians as Krishna, by the Chinese as Tao, and by other races as symbolized by various concrete images such as Buddha. Plato had come close to the spiritual truth. Later his immortal follower, Plotinus, bore onward the torch. It remained alone for Christ to humanize it by giving it the name "Our Father." Thus Love in its mystical aspect was born into the carnal mind, giving it the only hope there can be.

I have never united myself to any church, because I have found difficulty in giving my assent, without mental reservation, to the long complicated statements of Christian doctrine which characterize their articles of belief and confessions of faith. When any church will inscribe over its altars, as its sole qualification for membership, the Savior's condensed statement of the substance of both law and gospel, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself," that church will I join with all my heart and all my soul.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

CHAPTER II

WHAT IS TRUTH?

If seeking the Truth seems easy, we can be sure we have lost our way.

THOMSON, "CONCERNING EVOLUTION."

. . . The Church does not inculcate and encourage free-thinking with a complete belief that thought, when really free, must by its own law take the path that leads to the Church's bosom, not only has no future in modern culture, but obviously has no faith in the valid science of its own tenets, and is guilty of the heresy that theology and science are two different and opposite impulses, rivals for the human allegiance.

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW.

WHEN confronted by any unexpected trial or problem, before passing judgment upon it, ask, is it true? In nine cases out of ten you will discover that it isn't.

I can hardly suppose that any one in his right senses would deliberately arrange his life according to what he knew was a lie. Most of us, I am bound to believe, try to be as truthful as we can be, and the

bare suggestion that we are not telling the truth, or are not living according to what we believe to be the truth, would be received with indignation.

Yet the great majority of men are undoubtedly living, controlled a vast combination of lies. They are guided by lies, and in a great many instances they are destroyed by lies.

What is truth?

Before a builder builds a house, or before any one of us engages to build anything at all, no matter what it is, is it not of the utmost importance for us to have the right instruments or tools? Indeed how is it possible for us to do anything, to build or create anything, unless we first have the means to do so at hand?

All this is so self-evident that it would seem a supererogation even to hint it, were it not for the fact that the most learned men, the deepest thinkers in the history of the world, have overlooked the simple requirement; namely, that before we can arrive at any conclusion we must first know what truth is.

A brief survey of any book by any philosopher or writer which aims to deal with any human problem whatever will show us that the writer makes a series of statements supporting some opinion or belief he entertains, and that he will argue in favor of this belief or opinion, generally with skill, often with passion, and occasionally with genius, without once re-

vealing to us the basis upon which he has built his structure.

We can never know the origin of man on earth any more than we can know the origin of our own consciousness. From the subjective point of view there is no difference. Truth compels us constantly to refer everything to our own internal court of last resort.

Suppose we consult the books and run over all the definitions of God that have been given. We shall be amazed at the variety. One man believes in a personal God. Another in a great spirit. One man is a polytheist. Another man is a monotheist. Each may be very far from the truth, but that does not alter his belief, and, moreover, there is no possible way to convince him that his belief is not true. He believes, and that is all there is to it. And—in one sense—he is right.

A great argument in favor of this attitude is the fact that we have to take most things on faith. We have only to read the eleventh chapter of Hebrews to realize how strong is the argument for faith.

If you have genuine faith in your doctor, he can heal you in spite of his profession or his pharmacopœia.

Practically all believe in God and have faith in him —but not in themselves. There is no more absorbing indoor sport than nursing one's inferiority com-

plex. We criticize God less and less and lay the blame to ourselves. We vibrate too much between vanity on the one side and humiliation on the other. We forget that God created us and that when we come to examine honestly our own little troubles they invariably vanish, thus showing their unreality. This world must always be just what we think it is, for what we do not think it is can never be known to us.

Many modern writers have declared that a very large part of our lives is made up of acts of faith. We take things largely on trust. If we are sick, we send for a doctor; if we need protection from knaves, we send for a lawyer; and so on.

With scarcely a thought we trust ourselves to railroads, to buses and trolleys, even to inexperienced motor-drivers among our friends. Indeed, when one comes to reflect upon it, the extent of our faith in others, in strangers, is well nigh incredible. We believe in almost everything but ourselves.

A doctor once told me:

"I am obliged to throw a bluff, in order to inspire confidence."

We have but a small idea of the extent to which human psychology enters into this area, and of how many men earn large incomes merely by trading on this deep instinct of faith.

Now what is the relation of faith to truth?

Faith is really a kind of unconscious leaning upon the Unknown, as this Unknown is expressed in many material ways.

For instance, it is not enough for us to believe that the men in charge of a railroad are skilled in the performance of their duty. We trust them, not alone because of this, but because we unconsciously believe that their skill has been given to them by God. We do not here stop to define God. The whole matter is quite vague. Occasionally some railroad hero saves lives and loses his own; and we honor that man deeply, because this gives us the opportunity to recognize the fact of our real faith in him. We say to ourselves, or we would say if we thought it out, "This man is an instrument of God, and his heroic act confirms us in our leaning upon God through men like him."

And so, as we go about, in countless ways we show our faith in God, the Unknown, or Totality, as it is expressed through those with whom we come into contact.

Faith therefore has this relation to truth. Through many devious channels it can be traced back to the Unknown, that is to say, to the great Source of our Being, to Totality. We may not be able to define God truthfully, but in a general way we know that we

came from somewhere, and we lean on this belief, without splitting hairs about the exact thing that God is. We know that we cannot reach up to the perfection of God, and so we go along in what confidence we can gather. If there is an accident and somebody is killed on the railroad, we are sorry, but we know that this happens very seldom considering the numbers carried, and we set this down to the law of chance.

We are betting on certain things because the chances are greatly in favor of them.

We know that if men were all drunkards no work would be done. We know that a man can drink occasionally and still do a lot of work. We know that better work is done in the long run by men who do not drink than by those who do. Therefore we determine to cut out drink as much as we can. When occasionally some fellow we like becomes a chronic drunkard we are sorry about it, but we are not deceived. These things are more or less mathematical; so it will be seen that life on the whole is not so much of a gamble as we often declare it is.

All food kills ultimately. If we could live without it, we could doubtless live forever.

In a general way we can tell very fairly what is going to happen in given circumstances.

Also, by some study, we can arrive at certain conclusions about character and human traits and qualities and abilities.

We know that if a boy has too much money it is likely to be a handicap to him.

We know, if a girl is beautiful and has no brains, what will probably happen to her.

With some experience we can predict a good many events before they happen.

Successful men take advantage of all these things, and that is why they are successful. They buy stocks when they are low and sell them when they are high.

When they make money, they do not squander it; they understand that money is not everything, and so they relegate it to its proper place in the economy of nature and life.

This is what we call common sense, control, character, and so on.

Yet the surface of life is undoubtedly one vast lie, and the only reason men are successful at all is because, perhaps quite unconsciously, they sense the truth underneath and follow it as best they can. Often they do this blindly.

But consider what it would mean if, instead of doing this blindly, we did it with our eyes open.

Think of what it would mean if we actually knew truth.

Christ said:

"Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."

Quite unconsciously, as I have stated, we subsist by means of truth without knowing what it is. Indeed it is probable that we could not live at all if we did not have some measure of the truth.

But I think you must now easily see that we certainly ought not to boast of our own mental powers, or anything like that, until we have first been able to define Truth; because unless we know truth, we cannot be said to know anything.

The moment we attempt to lead anybody else out beyond the line of the senses we can offer no proof.[1] All that we can say is, try it for yourself and see that it is true.

If you do not know what truth is, how is it possible for you to tell whether anything at all is true or not?

Therefore you *must* be able to say whether a thing is true or not.

What is truth?

To answer this question we must first create some standard whereby it is possible to judge truth.

[1] The ablest analysis of this problem will be found in Professor Caird's "An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion."

Now is it not perfectly self-evident that a thing cannot be true which has no lasting quality?

A thing that is true must always be true. It cannot be true to-day and not true to-morrow.

For instance, if you read in your paper the advertisement of a headache powder with the assertion that it cures a headache, is that true or not?

There is a testimonial from some man saying that on a certain day he had a headache, and that after he had taken this powder his headache disappeared. But does that make it certain or true that the powder cured the headache?

Furthermore, in a case like this, how would it be possible to prove anything at all? You might collect several thousand people and get them all to testify to the efficacy of this powder, yet that would not actually prove anything.

We know perfectly well that in the case of certain patent medicines, thousands have testified to being cured, when several years later this medicine died out and lost its alleged power.

In short, we come to see that evidence of this kind is not evidence at all; it has no relation to truth.

The fact is, that Truth has no relation to anything at all in the material world. Truth like reality is merely an idea. It is something never realized; that

is, it is never realized in our sense consciousness.

It cannot be, because our sense consciousness is changing all the time.

Time itself is not true.

What we term time is merely the succession which seems to take place in our consciousness as one set of material conditions merges into another.

The one and only thing we know about Truth is that it is constant, it never changes. It is always the same. We try our best to fasten it upon material things. We are constantly saying, "That is true," when it isn't true at all. The lover says to his sweetheart, "I will be true to you." A little later he is quite false. In either case we are dealing with an illusion.

When, however, we change over from the material to the spiritual conception of things in general, then we experience a most radical transformation.

It is perfectly useless to attempt to explain this change to those who do not understand.

The most learned man in the world may easily be one who understands the least. He is under the additional handicap of his learning.

Now the Truth is something which is permanent, unchanging. That is one thing about it by which we can judge it.

What happens in the spiritual world, when a Truth

dawns upon us, is merely the sudden perception that a certain thing is unchanging. How can this be defined? I hardly know; it is very difficult.

To those who have attained some measure of perception of the truth it is of course easy. They understand already; it is not necessary to explain it to them.

To those who stand on the threshold and are anxious to understand but have not yet arrived at the condition of understanding, the matter can perhaps be best explained in this wise:

Getting mad—from the slightest impatience to violent anger—is all destructive and reacts upon the performer, and all because it is not based on Truth—permanence. To become excited over the injustice in the material world is to waste one's spiritual energy. Resist not evil. Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord. By keeping your own thought tranquil you provide the greatest amount of power to make things better universally. Example is more contagious than anything. Love your enemies, and they will eat out of your hand.

A thing is true when no set of human conditions can alter it in any way. Not to perceive this often requires a great deal of real suffering, because we cannot remove ourselves from material conditions into the higher plane of the spiritual without under-

going the natural adjustment (the relinquishment) which takes place.

The courage and the desire to suffer are both essential to progress. To repudiate pain or suffering because it is distasteful to us at the time shows how limited is our conception of Reality. We suffer temporarily to be free permanently.

Only through suffering can the enlightenment come which makes suffering unnecessary. Learn to despise the things that cause you to suffer, and then your suffering will depart. Pain ushers in joy. Spiritual joy is not ecstasy, but a consciousness of union with Totality, or God. Even this consciousness depends upon recollection of pain, because no consciousness is possible without contrast. God eludes us, but always returns.

Nothing is so bad for children as to pander to their desires. We all of us know in a general way that a spoiled child is a menace to himself and to every one else. Any bachelor or any old maid may know more of this aspect of truth than any parent. Yet a bachelor who knows this truth, if he gets married and has children, may violate it much more readily than others he has previously criticized. In short, here is where our feelings enter.

Let us suppose a parent has a number of children, born rather far apart.

The first child is spoiled. This child causes his parents a great deal of trouble. From this trouble they learn the truth; that is, that if you want to save a child, you must withhold your selfish love and replace it with an unselfish love, which means that you are not to consider your affections, but are to discipline that child, no matter how much it may wring your heart to do so.

When you have been through this experience, and through suffering have seen the great truth that we cannot yield ourselves to the demands of others, then you have learned a section of Truth, which is permanent.

Professor Edwin Grant Conklin of Princeton, in "Scribner's Magazine," writes as follows:

> It is only in its greater accuracy that the scientific method differs from those in universal use. It is true that no scientific observation, comparison, analysis or generalization is ever complete or perfect; it is true that in science, as well as in all affairs of life, we deal with probabilities of a higher or lower order rather than with certainties; it is true that all generalizations are theories rather than facts and that all scientific knowledge is relative and not absolute. But in spite of these limitations, no other method of inquiry has been found as reliable as the scientific method.

I quote this passage because it is in brief compass a perfect example of the straits that the educated

mind finds itself in when it tries to come to any real conclusions. What Professor Conklin declares in effect is that we really know nothing, but that the scientific method is the most sensible way of concealing our ignorance. The only positive statement he makes is that no other method is any better. How does he know? What is it that makes it possible for any man to say that there is no other method than the one he declares is a failure? For certainly a thing must be declared a failure when it fails to tell us the truth.

Professor Conklin, in common with many biologists and scientists, goes on to give various facts gleaned from the history of the world and from methods of research; these methods are often quite wonderful, and we must feel toward the man who originates them the same awe that we feel before the work of some great artist. I am by no means decrying Professor Conklin or disdaining his able writing, I am merely pointing out that he is wrong in his conclusion.

But how can it be said that I am either wrong or right?

Well, then, the first thing we must remember and must never forget is that all these various theories, history, biology, science, evolution, and so on, lie solely in our thought. They have no reality outside, for there is no outside.

The next thing to remember is that, no matter what theory is advanced, it must always be referred to our judgment, to this internal court of thought which sits within the mind. Truth therefore is something which I know to be permanent and invisible. I understand when a thing is true and when it is not. That is the ultimate fact, and nobody can reverse its decision.

Now the moment I understand this truth in itself, it follows that, if I wish to know whether a given thing is true I alone must make the examination. There is nobody else but me. Professor Conklin goes on to say: "Antievolution, antivivisection, antivaccination and antiscience are all the outgrowths of extreme emotionalism, reckless in handling facts and an utter ignorance of the value of scientific evidence."

But here again we are in a dilemma, because he himself has admitted that scientific evidence is only the best method among many, all of which are unsatisfactory. Also, before he can state with truth that emotionalism is untrue he would have to explain just what he means by emotionalism. If he entered into an inquiry and used scientific methods, he might discover that a very large proportion of the greatest things in the world had been accomplished by emotionalism. (Read in Plato's "Phædrus" what Socratus says about madness.) Also, what are facts, and

what does he mean when he states that certain people are reckless? I think he will probably agree with me when I say that often people do the silliest things, commit the most stupid blunders, and then immediately retrieve themselves by doing some great thing. When one attempts to make an estimate, as Professor Conklin has attempted to do in his article, and passes on the merits of any class of people, what he is really doing is to level a criticism at a form of consciousness which is assumed to have some objective existence. But the fact is that nobody knows, or has any right to pass judgment, whether a particular thing is good or is not good for the human race. We must first agree upon some standard, and this is quite impossible. There is no other person who could agree with me, because before this could be done, we should both have to know whether the other fellow is real or not, and we never can know that. Professor Conklin so far as I am concerned is merely a quite respectable form of my own consciousness. When therefore he rises up and declares that so-and-so is true, I refer his statement to my own court of inquiry, and the court comes back at me and says that Professor Conklin has no reality and I must form my own conclusions about truth and these are that a thing is true for me, only as I understand it to be true.

What therefore is understanding?

I understand that a certain material form which I have come to know as my child is unreal so far as his body is concerned, but there is something which looks out of him which I recognize as being one with the thing I feel within me. Now when I first made my acquaintance with the outer form of this child, I fed him candy and he had convulsions. As time went on, as what we call years went by, I learned that in order to retain my hold on that invisible thing which I term Truth, I must resist the pleadings of this child. Also I learn that as he has advanced, his pleadings become more subtle, so that I have to cast about me to understand new methods of resisting him. In short, out of this whole process, perhaps covering many years of time, there emerges an invisible something which I understand as Truth because it is a permanent, unchangeable principle, a reality by itself and only *brought out* within the circle of my consciousness by means of the material unrealities I see or seem to feel; that is, by experience.

I could multiply this many times, but my intelligent readers who are advancing along the same spiritual lines with me will immediately understand my meaning. Educated gentlemen like Professor Conklin, will not, because the unspiritualized growth of consciousness which we term education rises like a mist

and prevents us from true understanding. To be a reasonable being is almost always to be a blind being, singular as this may seem. Yet it is true. After all, is not the only real education that which shows a man how ignorant he is?

Let me now state with absolute confidence that there is not only a much better method than Professor Conklin suggests, but that it is the only true method. It is based upon absolute perfection, nothing short. It is so accurate that it actually and literally moves the course of the sun in the heavens. It is the great reality back of consciousness. And it can be attained only by those who first come to the sublime decision to give up everything they have previously thought precious.

Much more than this, our method proves itself. It does not require a list of authorities. The authority not only lies within one, but it is absolute and universal. At the risk of being tedious, let me explain a little further.

Truth, according to the method I have defined, is removed at once from the realm of the material and changeable, and brought within the infinite circle of the real. And the irrefutable test is this: Do I myself know it is true? And do I understand it as Truth? It comes through revelation.

This, you must perceive at once, is not a dogmatic

test. It is not at all a question of mere affirmation but of such an understanding as admits of no possible doubt. Furthermore, it is universal, not special. And just here it is essential that I make a distinction between this thing labeled as an affirmation and this thing recognized as Truth.

If two men get into an argument about religion, and one man says that man has descended from a monkey and the other man says he hasn't, each man may believe he is right, and in this sense he is certainly uttering what appears to him to be the truth.

But in this instance the delusion lies in the false assumption that the two men are real. It is therefore quite impossible to advance such a case as this in support of anything at all, because we are dealing with mere appearance. Let me now go a little further.

Tranquillity, which is based on a knowledge of truth, never comes from the exercise of will-power but the reverse—letting go. This letting go comes only through searching and understanding.

Now if we are going to indorse a method of scientific thinking which is irrefutable, we must discover if we can something which is so comprehensive as wholly to embrace the abstract idea of Truth. This principle must be so certain that the mere description

of it will be recognized by anybody as accurate. Can this be done?

Yes, in this way, and I invite the most careful attention of my readers. We are here engaged in a demonstration of scientific thinking, which must be so convincing as to leave no doubt. And we can do it in no other way but by a symbol.

This symbol is the world Man. Man is an all comprehensive word. Why?

Because within Man lies the whole universe of consciousness. Take away Man, and everything vanishes. It is here not necessary to differentiate among the various material parts of a man's body as brains, stomach, etc. It is only necessary to say that Man is an infinite circle or anatomical outline within which all things that are known are inclosed and without which nothing can be known. A microcosm.

What I am as a man, all are. Nothing can exist except within internal consciousness, and whatever seems to be real as outside of me is an illusion. There can therefore be no test of Truth except that which lies within Me. In other words what is termed the Individual (that is to say, Man) is supreme, and Art, Music, Drama, Science, Philosophy, the planetary system, the wide universe itself, are all comprehended under this generic term of Man. The in-

habitants of the globe are only one man, constantly repeated.

It follows from this, as certain as that there is anything, that there are not many men, but only one Man. How dare you doubt this? Do you not see that You are that Man? And so the truth dawns upon you, that is, it dawns upon Me, it dawns upon Man which is Me; namely, that I myself am the whole criterion of Truth, and what is Truth for me is universal truth.

The demonstration lies immediately in the process. And what is this process?

It consists in discarding, discarding, discarding. By an inevitable fate over which I myself have no control, I am constantly engaged in making a selection of ideas, and these ideas are stamped by me counterfeit or real as they present themselves before my court of last resort. If, as stated, I have a child and spoil that child and the child becomes a discord to me, I recognize this as false, and in the light of bitter experience I revise my thought until suddenly I see the Truth, and when I get this glimpse of it I not only recognize it but I understand it and am ready to die for it if need be. I thus follow Christ.

But if, you say, this is true, how does it happen that I hold to something which is false (as in the child-spoiling), for while I am holding to it I am certainly

thinking of it as true? And this being so, how can I tell whether at any given moment anything is true or not, for the next moment I may be forced to discard it (having, so to speak, found it out)?

Here is the answer to that question:

I do not recognize anything as true which is not true. I merely go along with it until the crisis comes, and then the truth is unfolded.

For me (that is, for Man, for there is no other) Truth comes through revelation, or experience illuminated by understanding and the test of Truth is whether it makes me tranquil or not, whether it leads me into the presence of God. I have to do the best I can under the conditions. Therefore I try things out, and while I am trying them out I believe in them to the extent of using them as a makeshift. This makes me restless, but what else am I to do? Life for me is a kind of continuous experiment. I put my confidence in a whole succession of things, not always because I want to but because I have to. I make the best of it. When I go on a railroad journey I do not really know but that at a given moment my body may be smashed to pieces. Nevertheless I go. I am a daring soul, and have long since accustomed myself to taking chances. Thus a very large proportion of all my actions are undertaken with a kind of running

faith, a hope that nothing will get me. But every once in a while a truth unfolds, and when it unfolds I know it absolutely, positively, accurately; there is never any doubt about it. It is the certain conviction bourne in upon me that God is here.

"Deeper even than consciousness" declares Amiel "there is our being itself, our very substance, our nature. Only those truths which have entered into this last region, which have become ourselves, become spontaneous and involuntary, instinctive and unconscious, are really our life—that is to say, something more than our property." We are indeed students, but in the highest sense. And Truth comes through two sources: through our daily experience and suffering, and by a kind of always striving to know, and this takes us back through the long line of mystics—neoplatonism and Plotinus, Paul, the Church fathers, Augustine, Ruysbroeck, all those who have helped to swell the stream of spiritual understanding. This is an interior process, although we may not recognize it as such.

CHAPTER III

REALITY AND UNREALITY

The important point for me was that after the second year of the war I was conscious in myself of the existence of some other life besides my physical one. I had not wished nor asked for it. I had done nothing definite myself toward the creation of it; it was simply there as my face and hands and feet were there.

HUGH WALPOLE.

IT is significant that the devil, when he tempted Christ, did not offer him any of the pleasures or allurements of the flesh. Instead he asked Christ to worship him; that is, in another rendering, to "fall down" before him. What he asked Christ to do was only to acknowledge his reality. He wanted to be acknowledged more than anything else.

So many writers on religion and mysticism go astray before the problem of reality and unreality, because they fail to define either term first, before explaining what they mean. They *assume* that reality and unreality mean such and such a thing, and then proceed to make their explanations.

Reality and unreality are both purely personal. What is real to me may not be real to another.

What was once real to me is now unreal. And vice versa. My conception of reality and unreality is changing constantly.

You can easily imagine what confusion this makes in the literature of religion and philosophy, when each writer has his own idea of these two words, and assumes that every one must agree with him.

The sun is a great reality to some. Sunburn is an intense reality to those who have suffered from it. Probably to the great majority of mankind the sun is the most real thing there is. To a few it is merely a luminous point in consciousness. What did Shakspere mean when he wrote, in "The Tempest," Act IV, Scene I?

> These our actors,
> As I foretold you, were all spirits, and
> Are melted into air, into thin air;
> And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
> The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
> The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
> Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
> And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
> Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
> As dreams are made on, and our little life
> Is rounded with a sleep.

I have read a great many books and chapters of books dealing with reality, and have rarely discovered any author who knew what he was writing about.[1] If any one will make a test and set down honestly his changes of feeling for one day, he will be astonished at the variation. Nothing could be better evidence of the insubstantiality of our material sense-consciousness. We do not know what reality and unreality are, so far as any definition is concerned.

[1] The literature on this subject is considerable. Consult Lange, "History of Materialism," and all the histories of philosophy. One of the latest books is "A Theory of Realism" by J. E. Turner, of which a reviewer in the "London Times" writes:

"Idealism has fallen into disfavor through seeming to deny the existence of an external physical world and through neglecting the truth that in knowledge we are dealing with objects not made by or dependent on their knowing them. . . . There are two kinds of idealism. The foundation of one kind is a logical argument that is inconceivable that anything can exist except knowing minds and what they know or experience, and that therefore the physical cannot exist except as an element in some physical experience."

The other kind, of course, is the one that denies any other reality than the material. There is no reason why any reader should become confused on this subject if he remembers that, from the everyday practical standpoint, everything is real enough. But if, with Descartes, I take the position, "I think, therefore I am," and do not admit any central intelligence but my own, then nothing can exist except what I apprehend egoistically. The same is true of space and time, to which I refer elsewhere, and around which is a vast controversy. I have a mild passion for clocks, and tinker with them continually. That is practical, material, everyday. But, abstractly and spiritually, neither time nor space has any reality for me.

But I can tell you what I think they are, and then you can use my remarks as a basis for your further reflections.

To me reality, take it as a whole, is only that which persists. In this respect it is distinct from unreality, which does not persist. Reality therefore, so far as I am concerned, consists alone in ideas (Platonic). Reality can never be to me anything else than an idea, because everything else vanishes. For example, the single issue of the "New York Times" which I hold in my hand vanishes. I throw it into the fire, and the particles which went to make it in the form it was have suddenly been translated into smoke and other so-called substances. I am told that nothing ever really goes out of existence, that the atoms and electrons which went to make up this copy of the "New York Times" have been changed to another combination. That does not make any difference to me. This copy of the "New York Times" no longer has any reality for me. But the "New York Times" is just as much a reality as ever. If all the copies of any issue were thus destroyed, the "New York Times" would be just as much of a reality as ever. The idea thus evolved is a permanent idea. It is true that in the course of many generations it may fade. Nevertheless it goes to make up, fractionally, a part of the total reality of the world of ideas. You can burn up

the New York Times Building and kill off everybody connected with it, so that the publication stops, but you cannot destroy the idea.

Now an idea like the "New York Times," or Shakspere, or Lincoln, or any other of a host of names that stand for ideas—these ideas, I say, all have another aspect. They are permanent, inasmuch as, though the author of them has gone, they have produced a permanent effect upon the human consciousness, so that it can never be the same as it was before they came. I can never write anything about poetry without thinking of Shakspere, although I may not even mention him.

It may seem paradoxical to state it, but as I see the matter, the only reality of which we can be certain is constant change. That is the only really stable, persistent thing. By this I mean that constant change enables me to understand the great reality back of it in which I come at last to rest. Suppose we now consider the difference between reality and truth. As I have stated, we do not always know exactly what truth is. A thing is often true only in its relation to other things. It is true for us that the earth revolves around the sun. But if there were nothing else in the universe but the earth and the sun, it would not be possible to say that either revolved around the other. Truth then is something we say is so, for particular

practical purposes. But reality is always something we think is not so until it is proved. We arrive at truth through understanding, at reality through experience.

To put it in another way, reality is always present, but we don't know it. It is not until it is over with that we can look back and see that it was there all the time. There is nothing else but reality. As we never can escape it eventually, is it not plain that to know it at all times is to solve all the problems of life? It seems almost ridiculous to say this, and yet that is the way it works out.

Speaking from the standpoint of Reality we are all living in death, and when we die mortally we die to life. We are constantly burying our mortal moments, and performing obsequies over them. Post-mortems are the delight not only of poker-players but of elderly ladies. The only real life lies in our thought and only when our thought is spiritualized. That is, we are alive only as we are alive in the spirit and not in the flesh. We can never be comfortable short of the idea of Totality, or perfection. That alone achieves tranquillity.

When reality gets us, as it always does in time, it brings us into perfect harmony. This is often gradual because of the necessary adjustment. Reality is

the great restorative. We always shrink from it, although when it overtakes us it brings peace.

The dispute between those who say there is no matter, and those who say there is, is on the same plane as the dispute between the reality and unreality of evil. The distinction is quite simple. Both evil and matter are real—temporarily. Permanently, they are not.

If you will summon up all your courage to face reality at any moment when in trouble, you will be surprised to see that your actual, real condition is not only quite different from what you supposed, but that your decision has removed you at once to a safety-isle. The trouble you fear always lies in the future. The real is the present.

Face reality and nothing can hurt you.

Here I leave the reader to his reflections. But, I repeat, do not accept the dictum of any writer on this subject. Read what he says if you like, but reserve your judgment.

CHAPTER IV

THE CIRCLE OF CONSCIOUSNESS

For an ego which does not change does not *endure* and a psychic state which remains the same so long as it is not replaced by the following state does not *endure* either.

HENRY BERGSON, "CREATIVE EVOLUTION."

Our senses give us little of reality. Nearly everything we appreciate mentally is an inference, human inference based on the senses. Even when you look out of a window at a landscape all that you can really get is variations of color in the retina. You only get ether vibrations: the landscape is an inference.

SIR OLIVER LODGE.

The unexamined life is not worth living.

SOCRATES, "APOLOGY."

MOST writers on psychology assume that there is both an internal and an external, and they constantly confuse the sets of terms belonging to each. They constantly use words like reality, truth, substance, etc., without defining them. As these words can be variously construed, according to the thought and education of the user, it follows that this practice nullifies a very large proportion of all that is written.

This comes from mental inertia, which causes even the most intelligent men to seize upon some surface thought and give it credentials without inquiring into its source.

Another confusing if not positively misleading thing is the fact that writers on psychology and biology use of necessity many words which cannot be understood by the reader, unless he goes over the same background that the writer himself has been over. Thus Frazer in his "Golden Bough" gives the history of taboo, showing the practice of taboo in primitive peoples, showing that a great proportion of our religious practices can be traced back to these primitive sources, and that they still adhere even when they assume other forms. Unless the reader is familiar with this background (here merely hinted at), he can understand but little in any modern psychology. When we consider the vast increase in our vocabulary which has taken place within the last few years, it is easy to see what confusion results, and how futile it is to arrive at anything approximating truth—truth which itself is questioned by every writer. Thus we have such expressions as "the herd mind," "regressions," "the self," "Behaviorism," and a host of others. Briefly, let me refer again to the word "reality." Superficially this word means what we see and can touch. Internally it means what we believe

in as something permanent. But even here we are in doubt as to permanence, because we think there was a time when we were not and that there will be a time when we are not, and therefore nothing can be permanent or real. This thought has been expressed by Spengler in his book, "The Decline of the West." It has also been suggested by Confucius.

It is just as true that, from the reverse side, words which have become established by psychologists, and to a large extent agreed upon, will be seized by writers on the spiritual life and appropriated to convey meanings of their own. In his stimulating book, "The Mystery of Religion," Everett Dean Martin thus writes of the word "Unconscious":

> This "Unconscious" is not a secret back stairway by which we may ascend to supermundane knowledge—as certain so-called mystics would like to regard what they call the "subconscious." It is basically biological—animal if you wish.

How can we extricate ourselves from the tangle of all this modern vocabulary, with its thousand and one words to express those hidden impulses which these mental research workers trace back through the history of man and likewise appropriate to express the data which they have gathered from personal diagnosis and laboratory observation?

It becomes very easy if we but constantly bear in

mind that there is no other standard by which to judge anything but the eternal "I" and that when we read or hear these various "opinions," new schools of thought, or alleged profound philosophies, we have only to refer them all to our own experiences. Not only as an intellectual diversion, but as a grand and stimulating exercise—one which affords me the raw material of much useful mental discipline—I enjoy reading the numerous writers on these manifold subjects, such as psychoanalysis, psychology, philosophy, biology, biblical research, history, etc. I find among all of them a great deal of truth, and much that is almost necessary and certainly sincere and helpful. Indeed it may be said of many of them that they are much more spiritual than the so-called mystics and spiritual leaders. They are good correctives. But none of them can lead me any further than to the outer gate, and if any of them were really necessary, then the vast majority of mankind would be cut off, and if we believe even haltingly in a God, this could not be.

The way to God does not lie through laboratories or libraries.

We must firmly come to believe that the truth lies within us and not without. Besides, we have an unfailing test in our own lives and experience. At any moment we can take stock of the state of our feelings, or our total conscious mental and spiritual

assets, and know where we are. Would we go back to the thing which we call "Yesterday"? That is the supreme test. So far as happiness is concerned, we can get a fair idea of the truth that thought is universal and that all of us are united in the bonds of a spiritual love (which is concealed so completely, however, that we often do not glimpse it for long periods) if we ask ourselves whether we would be content to be the only happy ones in our own community.

Suppose that YOU were able to achieve this destiny? You could not accept it, because in its very nature it would cut you off from the others, it would make you distinct and superior, and this would be self-defeating.

How simple it is therefore, viewed in this light, to see that each one of us actually holds dominion just as he is able to free himself from these illusions that he permits. Man, as an individual, is supreme within the circle of his own consciousness, which is all there is. Nothing can trespass upon his domain which he forbids. It is only necessary for him to realize his power, that is, the power that flows through him, by reason of his understanding.

"Smothered in daily life by the fretful activities of the surface mind, reality emerges in our great moments," writes Evelyn Underhill. And Aristotle,

perhaps the greatest mind of all, exclaimed, "The intellect by itself moves nothing."

There is yet another matter to be understood, and perhaps this is the most important of all. In spite of the "picking to pieces" process I have referred to on the part of psychologists, it still remains true that those who have held the soul's union with God to be the supreme quest are the very ones who through the long period of history have had the greatest influence, not alone on mankind in general, but on the learned themselves; and it is even doubtful if without them we should have any real art, any real poetry, any real literature. They not only have inspired scholars and artists but they have been the chief inspiration of these men. Take away St. Paul, St. Augustine, St. Francis, St. Teresa, John of the Cross, Mme. Guyon, Boehme, Ruysbroeck, and a long line of mystics who in the light of modern psychology are too often sneeringly relegated to the psychopathic ward, and where would the world be to-day? These religious are indeed the hope of the world, and countless human beings in secret vigils testify to their reality. How petty appear the fruits of the intellect compared with the fruits of the spirit!

It is through the consciousness that anything can come to us, and this consciousness is the only thing which enables us to have any understanding at all;

it is our total area of sensation and feeling. It is what we think with and what we feel with. Take it away, and we would be instantly blotted out. The universe and everything in it exist only in our thought. Thought may be said to be the fluid content of consciousness. All this is trite enough but needs constant revaluation.

The world we see outside of us is really not outside of us and has no objective reality but is merely our internal conception. Everything depends on our consciousness to determine both reality and unreality. We have only to separate consciousness into its component parts in order to boil down the universe to a few sensations.

We may divide our consciousness into, What we like, and, What we don't like, or things pleasant and unpleasant. We may call them pleasure and pain, good and evil, light and darkness, etc. But I shall refer to them as discord and harmony.

When we are in harmony, then the world flows by us, the universe seems very good to us, the stars shine for us, the winds blow for us, all sounds vibrate for us.

When we are in discord, then all is quite sad. The more we try to get back into step, the worse seems to be the discord.

Our consciousness is like a circle, within which is

a seething mass of sensation. It is never quiet. In it are elements of unrest. But while sometimes it boils over, at others the surface is comparatively calm.

As we move along through life, our whole desire is to make the circle of our consciousness one of complete harmony. We are constantly defeated in this effort. Within the circle of our consciousness the whole drama of life is being enacted over and over again.

Amid this uncertainty, is it any wonder that we are likely to listen to those who tell us there is a sure way to complete harmony?

These insistent people, who, seemingly external, rise from within, are constantly bidding for our attention. Each one has his own remedy. Each one assures us that his way is the only way. Theosophist, astrologer, new-thoughtist, psychologist, the will-power developer, the mesmerizer, the rationalist, the agnostic (brave man!), the Methodist, the Presbyterian, and all others, Catholic and Jew, Inspirationalist and Christian Scientist—each and all have their own claim.

And yet it requires but a comparatively little of the simplest thought—if the problem is faced honestly and directly—to see that inasmuch as the consciousness is constantly changing, no reliance can be placed upon any material or brain method which offers sta-

bility. Also, if the consciousness were not always changing, we should shortly lose it.

The very condition upon which it functions is that of constant change.

If there were only one kind of food, then it would be like the air; we should lose consciousness of it.

God is precisely like that, except that because God is constant and always present, we have no consciousness of him. We only come to have this consciousness when we begin to acquire spiritual vision. Of this elsewhere.

We see therefore that the very conditions which make up our consciousness depend upon constant change.

We also see that any one who offers us a remedy for this change is merely trying to delude us.

Let us now take another step. If change is the one condition of consciousness, is n't it possible that this change may be pleasant? There are some varieties of food that we do not like, but, on the whole, most of the foods spread before us constantly delight us by the mere fact that they do change; that is, they furnish variety. Now if this is true of foods, why cannot we manage our consciousness (our affairs) so that, even if they change constantly, all the changes will be pleasant?

We know this is done for brief periods. Suppose

we go on a tour to some country we have never seen. Our journey, which may extend for a few months, is a constant delight. Our consciousness is vibrating with change, one of unalloyed joy. Nothing happens to disturb us. Besides, we seem to see others who are so made that they can go on through a whole lifetime feeling just this way. They are creatures of joy.

Yet the answer to these questions is incontrovertible on any logical or spiritual grounds. So far as others are concerned, we cannot tell about them, as we have no means of knowing. We cannot believe what they say, as they may be deceiving themselves, and also they may be consciously if innocently deceiving us. We must dismiss them completely from our mind, so far as any just comparison is concerned, and adhere strictly to the problem, as we see it ourselves; that is, as it enters into our own individual experience, because that is the only test.

We know two things.

First, that so far as any of the remedies I have mentioned are concerned (religion, rationalism, hygiene, etc.) they have nothing to do with us when we are harmonious. I mean by this that the harmonious condition I have described (on a tour, etc.) would be so in spite of any remedy, one way or the other. You can be a Theosophist, a Buddhist, or a Methodist, but

given your temperament, you will enjoy your tour just the same.

Second, there is always an awakening. No matter how blissfully harmonious you may have been, even with all the changes taking place in your consciousness, you will, at certain periods, be confronted with discord. And it is at precisely this point that those insistent people will be waiting for you.

What will happen to you?

Well, in plain terms you will suddenly be up against it. There are three ways in which this will or can happen.

Your support; your relationship with others; your health. These are the three centers of disturbance in every consciousness.

There is also another, the thought of physical death. This last disturbance may have been with you always. It may have been very faint at first, but it grows more insistent until you cannot drown out the noise of it. It is, however, entirely separate from the others. It is not dependent upon them.

So far as those things are concerned, you can see how they may spread. You lose your money; your friends go back on you; the ones you love, and who have contributed to your sense of harmony, may die, and then your health gives out.

So your circle has become very much mixed. This new element of discord seems to broaden more and more. In some cases indeed it may swallow up all the rest, and your entire area of consciousness may become a whirling fire of agony.

At this point you are willing to listen to anybody who can offer you relief.

It would be amazing to see how successful these people are—I mean in getting your attention—if it were not for the fact that your desperation makes you such an easy prey. Naturally you are willing to try anything.

And here a curious fact develops, that no matter whose remedy you try, relief follows almost instantly.

Any remedy cures temporarily.

That is the reason why it is so easy to get testimonials.

Haven't you ever thought how strange it is that there should be so many testimonials for remedies which you know are purely illusions?

There is no cure so silly, so utterly and completely ineffective, that some one will not indorse it.

This ought to make us stop and think. Indeed is it safe to believe anybody?

My answer is NO and again NO.

It is not even safe to believe yourself.

If you examine yourself carefully, you will discover that you have often furnished yourself with false testimonials as to a certain course of conduct. Yourself will say, "Such and such a thing did not do me any harm."

Is there then no remedy?

None whatever. Not from the materialistic standpoint. Help may come of course from many true spiritual sources—from the church, from many demonstrated spiritual agencies, and from individuals—but only as these have been purified.

The real remedy lies in the understanding of the great spiritual law; namely, that so long as we are here, we must suffer discord, in proportion as we lack spiritual understanding.

If, however, constant and complete harmony is beyond us, this is not because it does not exist, but only because the conditions of this material life make it impossible to attain it completely. We see now through a glass darkly but then face to face.

We do attain a strong sense of it for a time, and we undoubtedly retain a little of it—unrecognizable—permanently. We should constantly, or as constantly as we can, bear this fact in mind; otherwise we can make no progress.

The normal condition of spiritual progress is to re-

duce the discord and extend the harmony in our circle of consciousness. Even allowing for setbacks it is comparatively easy to determine whether we are making progress. Yet here again I must suggest caution for the reason that there is actually no past and no future. The eternal NOW governs us.

For example, at this present moment I am supremely harmonious, but by lowering myself mentally, into this material pit, in a few moments I might become a wretched semblance of my former self. And in this condition I should then begin to wonder how in the world I ever thought I could be happy, just as now I wonder how I could ever permit any set of material conditions to make me unhappy.

These high moments can be almost indefinitely extended, so that while it is true that they cannot be definitely guaranteed, it is still possible to make them longer and longer. What is that condition which breaks them? The harmony of our consciousness is broken in two ways: First, by an unexpected thing which suddenly upsets us; or else by a slight incident which suddenly BRINGS BACK a previous condition over which, during our moment of harmony, we have held dominion.

One of your children has displayed a certain weak-

ness in a certain direction. This has caused trouble not only to himself but to a number of others. You have for a long time studied this condition and have been the means of helping him to overcome it. Disasters attend upon the recollection of it—what psychoanalysts term a complex. This condition, however, has been so much improved that you begin to feel harmonious; that is, your mind is at rest about it. You feel that at last you have gotten the best of it; it no longer troubles you.

But suddenly a slight incident occurs which makes you see or at least believe that you are mistaken. Immediately, like a rush of tragedy, the whole miserable condition of discord comes back and floods your mind. This is merely an illustration showing how the discord works. My readers will each, I am sure, be able to recall many examples in their own lives. What is to be done?

The answer is very simple. There is nothing the matter with your child. It is with your own thought. You do not believe this? Try it and see.

In the first place, when confronted by a complication such as I have indicated—about another—are you sure that you have the correct facts? By what standard are you judging your child, or whoever else may be the apparent cause of your disharmony?

Are you judging him by human standards or divine?

How do you know that his so-called weakness is really a weakness?

You simply do not know what is taking place in the mind of another. Also, you may not know that to criticize him, to fasten the fault upon him, is merely to extend the possibility to further weakness. I have seen people become hopeless drunkards merely by the fastening of the drunkenness upon them. I know that this is so because I have seen hopeless drunkards recover merely by not having the weakness fastened upon them.

A woman friend of mine, whose husband was out of work, came to me and said:

"My husband is such a poor business man."

I said to her:

"Reverse your thought, and say he is a fine business man."

Next week she came to me and said he had secured a position.

Now we cannot actually trace the working of this truth. We can only see that it does work. It may seem foolish to declare that this woman's thought had anything to do with her husband's position. But it did. WE DO NOT KNOW EXACTLY HOW IT

WORKS, BUT WE KNOW THAT IT DOES WORK.

If we come to analyze it, however, we shall see something of its working.

It is reasonable to suppose that if a wife looks up to her husband through thick and thin, if she understands his real intention, if she believes in him, and has confidence in his ability, this will react upon him and give him the necessary confidence in himself to carry him through. I repeat that thought is communicated everywhere. If I think of myself as competent, others will think the same of me. Still more important is the fact that if we think of ourselves as competent we carry this vision in our thought, and this in itself tends to make us become so.

What we think is therefore of the greatest importance.

Examine every thought that comes—or seeks entrance—into your mind, to see if it ought to come.

Yet this is true only so far as, on an ascending scale of awareness, you realize its truth. And you have no original power to *anticipate* this realization. The common idea held by so many, that each one of us is the product of his own thought, is true only in the limited way; for we have only the power to *desire* that a certain thing shall be so, and this is due to pressure which rises up out of the internal con-

sciousness (the unknown) as a counteractant to other conditions beyond our control from which we shrink.

Thought is not something manufactured on one's premises. Thought is nothing but a being aware of certain images and feelings in succession which at the time we hold in solution in our minds. We *seem* only to be able to direct this succession, but this is an illusion. We think, not what we deliberately set ourselves to think, but what we are driven to direct ourselves to think, by these psychic impulses which rise up as needed defensively in order to release us from disharmony. We determine to think in a certain manner to relieve ourselves from the pressure of disturbing thoughts which bear down upon us. What we term thinking is merely the replacement of one set of thoughts by another set. This is never an original decision, but is forced upon us by the unknown (the Unconscious). We are parts of the World-soul.

The understanding of this truth is what gives us power; that is, it makes us the receivers, but not the originators, of power! We do not make power; we hold it in proportion as we understand our own material nothingness.

Giving up your possessions is therefore giving up your attachment to the illusion that by your own initiative you can change anything. When we seek God,

rest in his continuous presence, and hold this thought, we become free in proportion as we succeed in this realization.

> The finished product of the different faiths might be stated to be as follows: Greece said, "Be moderate—know thyself." Rome said, "Be strong—order thyself." Confucianism says, "Be superior—correct thyself." Buddhism says, "Be disillusioned—annihilate thyself." Hinduism says, "Be separated—merge thyself." Mohammedanism says, "Be submissive—bend thyself." Judaism says, "Be holy—conform thyself." Modern materialism says, "Be industrious—enjoy thyself." Modern dilettanteism says, "Be broad—cultivate thyself." Christianity says, "Be Christlike—give thyself."
>
> E. Stanley Jones.

CHAPTER V

THE GREAT I AM

How do we come to be sure that human beings other than ourselves exist?

GEORGE A. GORDON.

That heaven in its whole complex reflects a single man is an arcanum hitherto unknown in the world, but fully recognized in the heavens.

EMANUEL SWEDENBORG.

(Let me here state as briefly and clearly as possible the truth about MAN the mystic. The first person must of necessity be used. Where it is temporarily departed from, this should not be construed as an inconsistency, but only as a symbolic form of expression, both the YOU and the I being comprehended under the universal word MAN.)

ONE of our greatest errors is reading into other people's minds what is n't there.

The delusion that there are others like myself is based almost entirely upon my habit of making running comparisons. This habit appears to be chronic. It has become indeed such an automatic process that it is very difficult for me to separate it into its com-

ponent parts in order fully to expose its falsity.

What I really do, by means of my creative fancy or imagination, is to project into that part of my consciousness called space an infinite series of beings, and, by a most uncanny creative skill, to give them life. Thus so real are these infinite personalities that —from those immediately surrounding me—I select a few, and invest them with the various emotions which go to make up my own personal consciousness. I love or hate them with passionate intensity. I am jealous or envious of them. I use them for the various purposes which my nature seems to crave. I depend upon them or I scorn them as the case may be. But no matter what I do, they are so real to me that beside them nothing else seems to be so real. And this projection of other personalities, if I can view it by itself, will soon declare itself to me as one of the most extraordinary accomplishments I possess. My own physical self is included among them —perhaps the most insistent of all.

The whole process, of course, when viewed superficially—as I am accustomed to view it—is one over which I seem to have not the slightest control. And indeed I would have no control over it, I would never even know that it was an automatic process, or its true nature, if I had not previously gone through a kind of interior devastation, which forced me into a rigor-

ous examination of my whole mental machinery; and even this examination has been similarly subjected to the most rigid scrutiny.

When anything disturbs me, no matter what, I am responsible in one way only; that is, to myself. And this disturbing thing must be uncovered in my own thought—to be overcome. The only reason why I cannot seem to overcome it is the illusion that I fasten the seeming responsibility on some one else.

How do I know that all of these personalities I see about me, extending into the infinite distance, millions of them called human beings, and including myself, are unreal, are merely projections of my imagination?

I know it because no matter where I go, I am always looking at everything from a central point, I am a center in myself, I never can get out of myself, I am the one and only original great I AM. And my delusion consists in the constant running assumption that this is not true; namely, that there are others, that there is an infinite variety of objects, etc., existing outside of me. Or if I wish to put it in another way, I can say that I seem myself (my body) to be an object which exists outside of an infinite variety of other objects, and these objects are what I call organic and unorganic. They are animate or inanimate. That is, they move about apparently of their

own volition, or they stay still, rooted in the ground.

The most infinitely interesting and constantly absorbing objects among all of this infinite variety are, aside from myself of course, what I term other people. And for me to make the discovery, to be followed by the flat announcement that they have no existence outside of by own mind, is a tremendous shocker. I have never had anything which has shocked me so much, which has caused such a tragic revolution in my consciousness. It is so tremendous that I never seem to be able to get used to it, and I am constantly reverting to the old order of things, falling back, for practical purposes, on those old loves and hates and envyings and manifold attachments.

And yet I am just as constantly being jarred loose from this clinging illusion and correcting myself in the light of Truth, and little by little I am seeing clearer. In short, the mask of humanity has fallen off, and while it is constantly being stuck on again, I know now that it is a mask, and even when I allow it to remain on, I can penetrate behind it and comprehend what the reality is.

How is it possible for me to show up this delusion in such a manner that its unreality will be at once evident? Well, I can only do this by a series of statements, all of which, as soon as I advance them, will be revealed to me as true, and the whole of which,

when they are put together, will constitute a convincing and overwhelming mass of evidence against that false creation called OTHERS for which I am responsible; at least over which I am the unconscious and automatic manufacturer. For if I am thus an offender against Truth I cannot plead ignorance as an excuse. Ignorance of the spiritual law may remove my sense of guilt, but it will not prevent me from suffering the inevitable consequences of my ignorance.

And consider what my sufferings are, when I have become awakened to this Truth! Here is some one I have come to love so completely that life without him is a desert; it is inconceivable. To arrive at the consciousness that he does not exist materially, that he is merely an automatic projection of my own consciousness, is to have the ground completely taken from under me; it is to make life wholly unlivable. Yet this is precisely what happens, and it is the decree of a most merciful Providence—if I thus choose to regard it—that the process must necessarily be a very slow one, that my realization of this enormous Truth must be a gradual thing. Here is a little girl sitting on my knee, who appeals to every emotion I have, who is united to me by every tie that my consciousness can weave. And I am told that she is a falsity, that she has no real existence. To resent such a base thought

would seem to be a matter of sacred duty. Yet it is all true. Not only has she no existence as I have come to conceive her, but the very machinery which has built her up in my consciousness is itself a film, an airy nothing, a figment of the fancy.

Lest it be thought that I am offering an utterly hopeless and degrading philosophy which must immediately be rejected as the outpourings of an insane mind, I hasten to state that, when my conclusion is seen in its splendor and beauty, all things whatsoever are returned to us with ever growing interest. If at present we are enjoying even in part a beautiful world, a world seemingly of hatred and revenge and tragedy, nevertheless a world of love and comfort and constant enjoyment, then this new world which replaces the old one is so much better, so much more transcendent, that it is well nigh inconceivable. The little girl I speak of is immediately invested with immortality. She becomes real in the only sense in which reality is of any lasting value.

A friend to whom I have become greatly attached, and in whom I have every confidence, suddenly and most mysteriously goes back on me. What I thought he was I now discover, to my consternation, he is n't. We engaged in an arrangement in which money was a part of the bargain. At a critical point in our adventure, my friend showed that he was mean and

selfish. For his own purposes he deceived me and took away from me that which was rightfully mine. He is now no longer my friend.

I have another friend who acted as badly but in another manner. Without informing me, he made love to a woman I loved, and to whom I was attached in such a manner that by every standard of loyalty my friend should never have intruded himself. He deceived me and was then shameless enough to tell me that, now that he had got the woman away from me, our friendship was of no more consequence. Indeed he prided himself on the way he had succeeded in getting her away from me, rather gloried in it, and gave every evidence of his belief that this act of deception showed his superiority. And all this from the man who had previously sworn he never would go back on me.

These two typical cases show the most common experience of humanity. They can be extended indefinitely. The woman I love takes the ground from under me at a most critical moment. The little girl I love grows up and wrings my very soul with her waywardness; the boy I have watched over, have nursed, have brought up, becomes a vagrant.

And so on. And so on.

If then we come to contrast this apparently living and practical and real picture of human conditions as

they are actually lived by all of us, we see that in the end our friends go back on us, our loved ones leave us or drag us down with them, in short, if we wait long enough, they all leave us and at the end of life —bitterly as we may resent this thought—in the end we are left entirely alone, to look out upon a desert of blasted hopes and our own bodies lose their capacity to give us any comfort.

If we live long enough, that is precisely what happens to each one of us.

The first thing I note therefore, in my arraignment of OTHERS, is this inevitable fact, that they are all unreliable. I never can be sure of what they will do under pressure. Even those nearest and dearest to me are the very ones to treat me the worst in a crisis. They will rob me of my time, my money, and my sacred honor. And they will do this under the specious guise of family affection, they will wheedle and flatter and use every art known in order to get me to yield myself up to them. OTHERS, in some way or other, are all vampires. The tradesman who calls on me with his cheery "Good morning" cares not one whit for me or my fate so long as he can get me to buy as much of what he has to sell as he can persuade me to buy.

But when I begin to analyze the process whereby I have created all of these various people outside of

me, it becomes immediately evident that it is an internal one and has nothing to do with them as they really exist. It is a very subtle but none the less a real and definite point of argument to understand that it is impossible for the other man to be wrong, even if you disagree with him, any more than it is for you to be wrong if he disagrees with you.

If the friend I thought was loyal is now disloyal, this is my affair, not his. My experience shows me that to-morrow he may be loyal once more. At any given moment in my contact with him, I never really know what he is. The same thing is true of all the others. Any one of them may play me the most shameful trick out of a clear sky and immediately perform some gracious act of sacrifice which fairly takes away my breath and fills me with shame to think I have so misjudged him.

It becomes very plain to me that my entire conception of others is built upon my own internal sense of what I have come to believe they are. Consequently if I wish even to make a beginning toward finding out the truth of what they really are, the first thing I must do is to reserve all judgments about them. They are phenomena.

I know nothing about them.

The reason I know nothing about them is because they have no existence outside of my own mind.

The same thing is true of my corporate self, and it is just this corporate self which causes my trouble, because this corporate self which has no existence apart from my own mind enables me to make these running comparisons.

If then I have no existence, and OTHERS have no existence, what is the meaning of life, and where am I at?

I AM THAT I AM.

I must never depart from this foundation. But once I come to understand it in its grandeur and I never care to depart from it. All things whatsoever are immediately referred to the great I AM, and that which before was only a figment of my fancy now becomes a wondrous reality. The permanent ideas of my consciousness, Love, Truth, Beauty, Creation, Being, all these unfold within and give me an entirely new understanding which constantly widens as my spiritual development proceeds.

Thus I come to see that OTHERS can never depart from me, that the externalized forms I see with the eyes of my senses are merely masks which cover the real souls beneath or behind, and that the Universe of my consciousness is all there is. Therefore to understand it all I must constantly look within and not without.

Certain symbolic words come to assist me in a mar-

velous manner. They are FATHER, SON, MAN, GOD, MOTHER, WOMAN, and so on.

I begin to see that what John wrote is truer than anything I have ever known:

> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

And it now dawns upon me that the reality of OTHERS is not in the masks of their human personalities but in the I AM which covers all my notions of so-called humanity.

When I communicate with another, I am communicating with another part of the great Self; that is, with the great I AM. I see quite plainly that if things are as I thought at first they were, I could never have any communication at all with these OTHERS. If each one were real he would be only himself, and therefore his language would not be mine. Now I see that because his externalized self is unreal I can communicate with his real self which is a part of my real self. My dog who looks at me with eyes that swim with love is a part of that Universal Self. He shares with me a part of the love of that Universal Self. Has a dog a soul? As certainly as anything that IS.

CHAPTER VI

MONEY BLINDNESS AND DETACHMENT

CONSIDERING now the material world from the objective standpoint, as human beings grow up from childhood and become conscious of themselves, they gradually acquire an always imperfect but working material knowledge of the objects they see about them, and by practice they learn what objects to avoid and what to use for their own purposes.

These objects, which include everything in the material world—personalities, objects of nature, etc.—are the only realities which the vast majority of people know.

By long and well directed efforts, aided by teachers who stand over them and their own desire to learn, the majority of human beings gradually acquire a wonderful technique in their relationship to these objects.

For instance, one of the objects they come to know about is money, a definite, practical reality to all. They can see it, handle it. They learn very early in life that it is apparently the most potent weapon they

can wield to protect and console them in this world of material things; they therefore spend most of their time in trying to acquire as much of it as possible.

But they also come to learn that while money is by far the most powerful thing they can possess (materially) it is not everything. It cannot purchase health or happiness, a shop-worn axiom. No individual can be materially successful without causing envy and sorrow in others. His material possessions, however much he may receive the outward respect and homage of others, are a constant if secret source of irritation. Few men who become thus materially successful realize the widespread subterranean envy with which they are regarded by their less successful friends. The proof of this lies in the way they display their possessions, often doing so with an outward show of modesty which, however, never deceives those who surround them. At the same time practically all of the methods of education invented by mankind are for the purpose of teaching oncoming human beings how to get through this life by learning how to protect themselves, while at the same time outwardly causing as little trouble to others as possible. The maxim, "the greatest good for the greatest number," is one that never seems to wear out. It is, however, a maxim that only applies to the surface.

When materially successfully men are unscrupu-

lous, the most strategic among them conceal this effectively by an outward conformity to the law and to whatever standards of society they may be living under. They thus acquire high reputations for probity, and are very likely to become philanthropists in their last years and to have monuments erected to their memories when they are gone.

The majority of people live and die in spiritual ignorance. Let us now consider what the materialized objects are, which people are so passionately seeking.

They are all unrealities, but this truth is never known to the majority. These objects are externalized out of some mysterious origin, which most people do not even stop to guess at, and which some of the ablest men will not admit as a working basis for certainty. Thus we see the most advanced scholars, who have passed their whole lives in thought, utterly unable to believe, or to admit, that there is any reality back of all these externalized objects.

We also see many of the world's most useful men in the same boat. If wealthy, they vie with the humblest child of the nursery in accumulating possessions. A millionaire will take as much joy in buying some expensive picture as a child will in acquiring a mechanical toy.

Many great men know so little the difference be-

tween love and sentimentality that they are afraid to practise the former lest they be accused of the latter.

That, in brief, is the situation confronting the vast majority of human beings. A small proportion—scholars, doctors, merchant princes, inventors, etc.—exert their minds to the utmost to discover, if they can, some path which leads out beyond these externalized objects. They are very honest about it, and they all declare that there is no path. They keep on hoping that one will be discovered. Meanwhile they are obliged to fall back on the sum total of all the externalized objects on hand to get through. A great doctor will, by hard study and uncanny ability, discover some new cure for a hitherto fatal disease, and will be hailed as a race benefactor. This is likewise true of other men—inventors, mechanical experts, great business minds, philosophers, poets.

Thus the human race, *en masse*, moves onward, developing marvelous new inventions, and, by a kind of social agreement, makes laws which will protect the greatest number. Wars continue, it is true. Still, it is also true that the race does progress. The means for comfort increase; it is probably true that the total material happiness is always increasing. And it would certainly be misleading to minimize the progress thus made.

Meanwhile the average everyday human being, do-

ing the best he can with what he sees and feels, is dimly conscious that underneath it all there is something which he does not understand. If he is healthy and successful, he may go quite through life and never know that there is anything else. What a boon it would be if every rich man could take out insurance which would protect the characters of his wife and children from the effects of superfluous money!

Such a fate, or luck, call it what you will, is not reserved to many, if we may judge from close observation. For the more we study human beings the more we discover that they are restless, miserable, dissatisfied, forever hoping and forever being disappointed. Also, we see many of them deeply depressed, many on the verge of suicide. They lack that deep sense of tranquillity which we occasionally read about or even ourselves feel in our high moments.

What is this tranquillity? What weapons can we employ besides money to make us happy? That is the problem before every human being.

This problem is so trite that it seems banal. But the fact is that until it is faced it always appears thus. It does not take on any real meaning until we are actually confronted by it. Then we hasten to those whom quite possibly we have hitherto regarded with scorn. We have heard the word "Christ" and the

word "God" dinned into our ears from the beginning, and have scoffed at them. Now, in our extremity, we begin to wonder first a little and then a great deal. We cast off our intellectual snobbishness.

All this does seem like the dullest kind of a commonplace, were it not for the interesting fact that the most eminent men, in the attitudes they adopt, display the most childish proclivities. Indeed a whole essay might easily be written on the child mind of the greatest men.

I have not the slightest objection to a display of this child mind. It may be said that true greatness is always the most simple. But it is not quite that that I mean. What I do mean is that the very first step toward spiritual intelligence is so utterly foreign to these mundane minds that they have no conception of it. And so, merely to keep themselves alive, they go about with the most infantile ideas about matters which are a-b-c to people who have advanced at all on the spiritual plane. Thus it is positively painful to talk to a highly educated, cultured man who has no spiritual insight. He is completely barricaded from any kind of real intelligence. There is no way that he can be gotten at. Cultured people bear the same relation to the intellect that society people do to child-bearing. The educated mind believes so thoroughly in itself and in nothing else that the hope

of trying to communicate with it requires the most rigid discipline. A man to whom music, art, poetry, history, indeed all the finer shades of good taste in intellectual matters, are second nature, may be so utterly ignorant, so utterly un-get-at-able in his ignorance, as to excite our very deepest sympathy. No wonder Christ turned away in despair and said the things he did! Blind leaders of the blind!

Any successful man must be more or less ignorant, in proportion to his success. Material success is generally a condition of accumulated ignorance. Twenty-four hours in the lives of the majority of men are about the same, in spite of diversities of occupation and possession and climate. They only eat, sleep, move about, and dream. The difference often lies in the fact that the stomach of a common laborer functions a little better than the stomach of a multimillionaire.

Then there are the attached people, with one-way minds. Priests of all denominations. I am not now criticizing any one; I am merely cataloguing them.

Anybody who is attached to anything material, be it church, business, state, learning—that is to say, pretty much everybody—these are the people I mean.

Does the fact of a man's having an attachment to anything condemn him from this point of view? Certainly not.

It means simply that, in this great world group of people, men and women with attachments, the majority know nothing else but attachments. As I started out to say in the beginning, they have no conscious life except in and among these attachments, and the wonderful skill with which they manage to steer in and out, and wrench success from failure, is something the contemplation of which makes one more certain than ever that there must be a God. We know that these marvelous people will be replaced, as they have replaced their predecessors, that the process will be constantly repeated with new actors, and that therefore some one must be working the strings from behind the scenes. Think of that for a moment, and then consider the conceit of great men. There is scarcely a successful man anywhere who doesn't think he did it all himself. Naturally their answer to this is, "If we hadn't had confidence in ourselves, where would we have landed?" That is not only pure nonsense, but indicative of the child mind I have mentioned.

And yet, strange and paradoxical as it may seem, great wealth almost always is a sign of hidden spiritual power, but not necessarily among the possessors of it. In every age where there has been great spiritual power, there have been men of great wealth. Wealth thus is not necessarily the direct outcome of

spiritual power but may be its attendant sign. The real reason why people worship wealth is because of the spiritual possibilities it gives and not the material. This fact, however, is not recognized. The desire for superfluous wealth is an unconscious submerged craving for reality.

Now the difference between those who do understand and those who do not is simply this: in the former case the attachments serve; in the latter they are served. That is all the difference in the world.

The man who understands is ready to give up any attachment at any moment. He is actually unattached. The material things and personalities which have attached themselves to him—not he to them—are passionately fond of him; they know that it is through his love and understanding they exist at all. We therefore have fearless people all over the world, immersed in material things, unattached, along with the cowards. You can mark them wherever you go. Yet they are always a minority. In the material world, people do not think at all, but only employ the sense images they have acquired as the mechanism of a mental exchange. This is revealed by the fact that our dreams are symbols; we dream in allegories. True thought is evolved from the great Self—the World-Soul.

CHAPTER VII

THE PRACTICAL PROBLEM OF SUPPORT

If you love and serve men, you cannot by any hiding or stratagem escape the remuneration.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

THE capacity of the human mind is unlimited. Incredible labors have been performed by individuals in all ages. Supermen have lived in every period. At present they are more in evidence than ever.

Man is limited only by his own false sense of limitation. We draw unconsciously from Being.

As we originate nothing in ourselves, man without faith shrinks rapidly to a nonentity. Whether conscious of it or not, man succeeds only through his spirit, and not through his mind or body. Character is the outward sign of an inward spiritual development. When this is understood, the study of right religion will be universal. Removed from the hands of incompetents, it will become the scientific foundation of all business enterprises, indeed of all material activities.

One of the besetting obstacles to all progress is

impatience. It is part and parcel of the attitude of criticism. It practically says to the personality, or to the condition, "Why do you not do at once what is expected?" That attitude in itself proceeds from a false sense of limitation. The brotherhood of man will not be achieved through our emotions, but through the recognition by the mind of the infinite power of the spirit.

Science is now paving the way. As soon as science completes the process of intercommunication between peoples, has shown that material resources can never produce happiness, man will then revert to the scientific study of right religion. The union of the spirit and the intellect is certain to follow. So far as material success is concerned, the only way to achieve it rightly is to work always on the principle that you belong to the public. Just as soon as the necessity is seen, men will lay down their arms and follow the real Christ, as he will be understood. At present we are in a period of transition. What is coming rapidly is a practical religion for men and women, which will be recognized as an unfailing guide in every department of human activity, just as now the Federal Reserve system is recognized in economics. If you withhold from God, God withholds from you. This is not retaliation; it is the effect of your incomplete understanding.

This result has not come before, because the world has been unprepared for it. It is only now that man is beginning to know the material world. Less than six hundred years ago Columbus discovered America. Since then war has followed war, invention has followed invention. While there naturally remains an infinitude of research in details, the world picture is fairly complete. We know what is the end of our rope. However we may scoff at the wild notions of some of our present spiritual leaders or the interminable stupidities of the commercialized agents of get-rich-quick brands of religion, everywhere men are coming to see that there is something more in this life than eating and drinking and the cheap display of possessions that melt away like a mist before the rising sun. The present armistice between real religion and science will be succeeded by lasting peace in which God will come into his own.

Mankind continually breaks and destroys itself on the wheel of the Definite, when the Indefinite is its only salvation. The Indefinite is God, because, since our consciousness is so limited by the sensual, we continually resort to the Definite. Thus we build systems of efficiency. Hence standardization.

The result will follow not through propaganda or widespread advertisement, but through the Individual. As Humanity is only one man constantly repeated,

when the absolute necessity for something beyond what we are now getting dawns upon the Individual consciousness, the process of the universal spiritualization of thought will begin. We shall make mistakes. We shall retrace our steps. We shall unlearn an immense mass of tradition. But in the end we shall conquer. And this result may come more speedily than we now believe possible.

One of the mistakes we too often make is not being selfish in the right way. The thing which we term unselfishness is too often a slavish yielding to the demands of others, the result of personal cowardice. The twin sins of modern civilization are Altruism and Sentimentality. We extol the first, and, while outwardly deploring, secretly encourage the second.

The object of this book is to make clear the whole problem, in terms of the common man and woman. We must begin at the very beginning and work through to the end, with the individual problem before us all: our expenses, our support, and come to see that it is an interior, spiritual problem. You cannot ask God to do your own work without suffering the consequences. Nothing is too unimportant not to be well done. Never allow yourself to think yourself lower than you really are. Taking up the cross means only holding up your thought. We can only overcome the world by revealing the necessity for it in

the heart of our daily lives. Then we shall free ourselves, and stand forth in the right liberty of universal Truth. Do not be troubled when you fail at anything. Success is due to a succession of failures.

From the severely practical standpoint, and for the moment disregarding the life beyond, a reading of this book and a proper understanding of it will increase any man's efficiency very markedly. No one will read it, however, who has not the germ of spiritual progress in his consciousness. We are attracted only by that toward which we are secretly drawn by an inner urge.

It is necessary to read this book more than once and to give it thought, in order to understand it fully.

There are three stages to any progress.

First, the desire.

Second, the answer to the desire, which comes often in seemingly miraculous ways by the presentation before one of the correct material to reach an understanding.

Third, the understanding itself. Really to know is to lift one's self above all formal knowledge obtained from books. It is the inner vision of the truth, directly proceeding from one's internal intuition. It is always internal, not external. Everything, no matter what, is determined in thought. The man with a material system, based on human selfishness, is like one

who voluntarily equips himself with a ball and chain, then locks his prison cell, and throws the key out of the window.

In city streets it is a common experience to be approached by beggars. Over a period of many years, when thus approached, I would invariably ask:

"How much do you want?"

And the beggar would invariably reply:

"A dime, mister."

Only a single exception marred this uniformity. One man, having replied "a dime" as usual, hesitated, thought, came back, and asked for another dime. The only difference between this man and the others was that his imagination had stirred within him. Even this slight stirring enabled him to double the amount.

None of these men knew that I would have given them a dollar or more if they had asked for it.

They were all one-dime men. That was why they were beggars.

Herein lies a great principle of conduct. We are all moving about in direct contact with the infinite power of the Universe. That we ourselves have any power, or generate any power in ourselves, is an illusion, to be dispelled by a moment's thought. Yet millions and millions of human beings, since the world began, have refused to take this step.

These one-dime men, now to be seen on any city street on any night, are in the same relative position as our ancient ancestors who were so long satisfied to rub two sticks together to make a spark. Just as it took millions of years even for the first advanced man-animal to build a fire, so it might take millions of years more before we could come to the understanding that we ourselves are the repositories of all the power there is, if we but raise our faces to God and ask. But this evolution is enormously speeded by our rapidly growing sense of the spiritual. It is the spirit that quickeneth.

A low mentality is merely the indication of a low spiritual awareness. But touch the man with the wand of the spirit, and at once he performs glorious deeds. Christ's disciples—with the possible exception of Judas, who was thought to be a lawyer—were all low-brows.

In our own daily lives, we have had the experience of seeing men fail. Indeed these failures may come in our own lives. I write now of business failures, represented by dollars and cents.

Men and women with families on their hands, or with dependents, are engaged in a constant running warfare with the oncoming army of struggling expenses. It is straggling, but oh, how powerful! And the snipers in it! It is never ending, and we

grow at times very weary trying to meet and overcome it. Out of our various expedients and defenses several reflections arise.

One striking thing we notice is that the men who seem to work the hardest frequently, and perhaps generally, have the least, while the idlers, or at least those who appear to have the most leisure, have the most money.

And to this rule there are not only exceptions, but if you become at all intimate with those who have apparently the most leisure, they will tell you that this is not so, and that what you think in them is leisure is the hardest kind of work. For instance, the president of a large corporation will seem to live a life of leisure; yet observe him carefully, follow him about, and you will see that he is working all the time—mostly with his mind. In contrast to his life, the manual laborer in one of his mills or factories works eight hours a day and is then through. For the rest of the time he can do what he pleases; he can gamble away his time or sleep it away.

Many of the ablest men in the world understand their success even less than the failures, so called. This whole problem is but little understood even by the majority of the clearest thinkers. No matter how much we may think we know, we ought to be very humble about it, and approach it simply and with-

out the conceit which comes so often through superficial reading and thinking and even experience for the old saying that you never really know what a man is until he is dead is but too true. I have seen many men rise to great worldly success, where it would seem that nothing could ever happen to them, and then be suddenly precipitated into the most abject failure, and this without apparently the slightest chance of recovery, merely because, all their lives, they had unconsciously neglected to understand the nature of this problem. They had overlooked the life of the spirit.

When you begin to rely on anyone else but God to direct you, then your whole success is limited to that reliance. Conduct counts. Keep your machinery clear. But you cannot motor to heaven on your own power.

CHAPTER VIII

WHAT DO WE REALLY WANT?

BENEFITS and disasters are all on the same plane. Both come and go "and leave not a rack behind."

All world-knowledge is a form of ignorance. We may judge of how greatly it possesses us by the obstinacy with which we refuse to believe that there is anything else beyond the senses.

Still, the first question we must ask ourselves is: What is it we really want?

And in the great majority of cases we shall be astonished to discover that the final answer to this question is that we don't know.

The common reply is: A million dollars. That is a convenient and all-embracing term. It is precisely like the "one dime" of my friends the vagrants, only on an enlarged scale. But if you give a man more time to reply he will at once begin to explain, and the longer his explanation is the more involved it becomes, until finally the man will flounder around and probably break down. He may begin with a million, and then make it two; then he will tell you

what he is going to do with it. He has thought it out —in those day-dreams we all have. He wants to give pleasure to others, he thinks it would be nice to travel, and so forth.

But if we turn from this man, who, let us say, is ordinarily successful, to the failure, that is, to the man who is not able to meet his expenses, and talk a million to him, he will tell you immediately that he doesn't want a million; it would only bother him: he would be perfectly satisfied to feel that he could leave his family enough to keep them from want.

Thus from the "one dime" failure, who has focused his horizon down to the next few hours, up to the man who talks millions, there is a long succession of conflicting desires, each individual depending in his mind, upon his previous experience, environment, education, and heredity.

Probably not one man in a million actually knows what he wants, in such a manner that it has become a stable desire with him.

The proof that wealthy men do not know what they want is shown by the fact that they are constantly making new purchases and discarding the old ones.

The present inquiry concerns itself with the problem of those who are not apparently able to make both ends meet. What are the reasons for this, and how can it be remedied? Self-support, saving, ac-

cumulation of property, are duties imposed upon all of us. The source of our supply, however, should never be *nagged.* By this I mean that if things don't come your way, relax and be patient.

The man who fails to support himself and those dependent upon him is not worthy to live in such a supremely beautiful world—although it may be added that this may not be his fault. We are not any of us guilty. We are only in darkness, "And how great is that darkness!" In proportion as one fears, one is unsuccessful.

What do we want most of all?

Materially speaking we want security. We are not actually deceived about the main facts of this life as it unfolds before us. We know that we have only a comparatively short time to live; say, from fifty to eighty years at the most. We know that, in common with the whole of mankind, we are subject to the various vicissitudes that come to all alike, rich or poor. We may lose our health and those we love, our friends may go back on us, and so on. We are philosophical about these things; we not only accept them, but we put them aside and forget them, quite rightly. We try to get as much joy out of life as we can, and when we do this we come gradually to discover that there is a great deal of joy in life.

We want to feel that no matter what inevitable

things may happen to us, we shall at least have enough to live upon, enough to fulfil our obligations and, departing, leave the world better by so much than when we came into it.

We simply must not disparage ourselves too much, nor let that inferiority complex get the best of us. We have the loftiest aspirations. One can scarcely pick up any daily newspaper without reading the record of some striking feat of heroism on the part of obscure people. Heroism indeed is so common in our daily lives that we do not even try to account for it.

Why then are all of us so constantly troubled about expenses?

If the supply is infinite, and there is no limit to the capacity of the human mind, why have we not found a method of tapping the sources so that each one of us is secure? It has been stated over and over, by great spiritual authorities, that suffering is necessary for progress.

That does seem to be true, as we look back and see how all the advances made have come through pain and blood. But the fact that, in the short time the world has been going chronologically, the world has had to suffer in order to advance, does not, I repeat, make suffering necessary as a permanent principle.

On the contrary, there are enough people here to-

day who have solved this problem of suffering, who are supremely happy in the only way possible, to afford a demonstration in the great Truth that suffering is transformed into spiritual tranquillity, once we come to understand what suffering is, and what causes it.

All human suffering is limited. There is a point where the sufferer—if he survives—begins to recover and understands what *real* happiness means. We are on the threshold of a wonderful expansion in man's spiritual vision; and this being so, we should be very reluctant to cling to anything which impedes this understanding, or the method by which we increase it. Let us therefore understand that pain and suffering are stages of self-development. Back of the mortal sense of things is the reality of God.

This position can be arrived at—and with a marvelous speed—by any one. In fact the understanding often comes instantly—in a day, in an hour—and thereafter the individual enters upon a new world.

CHAPTER IX

GOD IS YOUR ONLY EMPLOYER

THINK of how much higher is that condition of mind which, instead of seeking constant help and superfluous favors from God, regards it as a duty to be on one's own, and, by one's very courage and independence, actually help God instead of toadying to him.

The great practical necessity, for a well ordered life, is to know this truth, that God is your only employer. You must not only believe this, but must understand it, that is, must KNOW it.

You object immediately. "How can I work for some one," you reply, "who is unknown to me?" In short, if we are always confronted by this doubt as to just who or what God is, how is it possible for us to work for him? Even if we could summon up enough blind faith, how could we then know what to do?

The answer is covered by two words. Try it.

It works. Try it as timidly as you like. Do not be afraid to doubt. Do not be afraid to be afraid. Try it.

If you will try the first remedy some one offers you for a cold, or for a toothache, why not try God?

This seems almost like an evangelical manner of putting it, but what of that? The most advanced thinker in the world uses the same method. He advances a hypothesis,[1] and then tries it and either proves it or not. Keplar, Newton, Einstein, all worked that way.

Suppose you are now employed by some firm or corporation on a regular salary, and that all of your income is derived from that one source. Can you truthfully say that this firm or corporation is your sole employer?

True, you are answerable to it for your service. But consider the thousand and one other influences which come in between you and your material employer! At any time you may fall sick. You may have domestic troubles. You may have certain weaknesses which you seem not able to overcome.

You work for your firm perhaps eight hours a day, and the rest of the time is yours. You must have friends. You must have recreation. Thus you see that while this firm is your sole employer, your relationship with it is modified in many ways over which you have apparently but little control.

There is one thing you know about God, if you

[1] See Appendix.

know anything. God is perfect. He must be that, or nothing. It is not necessary for you to know anything less than this, and a moment's reflection must make you see that this would not be possible. You form your conclusions about everything by means of a set of senses which are always going back on you. In your material, practical, earthly life, you are always correcting the results of these sense impressions. You do not despise them. Indeed you trust them to carry you along, and they do carry you along. But you know by experience that they are limited. And it takes only a very little additional thought to convince you that with these senses you cannot form a complete conception of God. God must be infinite or nothing. You are finite; that is, so far as your brain is concerned.

And just as soon as you see this, you are then in the right condition to begin working solely for God.

This is the way:

God is the ultimate perfection. He is complete harmony. That is all that you really need to know about him—even if this is only a belief—because it enables you to get into your thought an absolute rule of life—a rule so simple that you can never go wrong.

Anything short of perfection is not God. Any ex-

citement, any trouble, any fear, any anxiety, any loss, any discord of any kind, no matter how slight, is not God. God is totality.

The whole thing is so simple mentally that it does n't at first seem possible it can be true. The answer always is; try it.

Having arrived at this point, the first question you may ask is this:

"But assuming that God is the ultimate perfection, and I work only for him, how am I to know what to do?"

Take no anxious thought about that. You are directed. Perhaps in a short time, perhaps immediately, or perhaps not for months or years, you learn to tell just what the direction is. Your progress will depend altogether upon the completeness of your faith. Never be afraid to make a mistake, for the reason that a mistake, being evil, cannot hurt you. It destroys itself. All mistakes are instructors in disguise.

The greatest obstacle you have to contend with is impatience. Remember that if Rome was not built in a day, you cannot expect to learn the ways of God in a day, unless such a complete revolution takes place in your thoughts that from your mind are cleaned out all illusions. The great error on the part of those who turn to God in their distress proceeds from the

fact that their frightened sense makes them lack the courage to act for themselves.

Surrounded as we are by the surge and bellow of mortality, it is not to be expected that we can overcome the world in a jiffy. It is the work of a lifetime to discover God.[1]

But this work is greatly facilitated and made much easier from the moment you begin to realize that God is your sole employer, and that from him alone do you derive your sole support. As soon as you see that you are accountable to no one but him, think how much simpler is your problem!

[1] The moral danger of unreflecting absorption in the world's affairs is apparent in the prevalent superficiality of thought and lack of conviction. Men may pass through long stretches of life without any consciousness of the small reserves at their disposal, but when the real test comes to them they find themselves carried away by forces against which they can make no stand. Without convictions and without ideals they have no sure place anywhere. Ignorant of themselves and with no standards of moral values, except those which have the sanction of convention, they are without reserves when the world of sense falls away, and illness or misfortune throw them on their own resources.

It is not merely that they have no store of knowledge. That is misfortune enough, but they suffer through the greater poverty of moral and spiritual life. Weighed in the balances they are found wanting. Bemusing their minds with phrases they have never taken the trouble to understand, and bending their conduct to standards whose worth they have never examined, they know nothing of the bracing inspiration of convictions wrought out in thought and tested in experience.

"London Times."

You will make mistakes.

You will have to retrace your steps.

You will be discouraged.

You will forget God at times—when you are prosperous—and think your prosperity is due to yourself.

But you will always come back. Once get this idea into your soul, and you cannot help but come back.

As soon as you see that God is perfection, and that perfection is harmony, then you have a rule which you can immediately apply to everything.

For instance, suppose you are discharged by your firm, without warning. That is disharmony, is it not?

Now in your former condition of unbelief you would naturally attribute such a disaster to any one of a number of material causes. You might say that some one in the office was jealous of you. You would be very apt to set this down as the result of some kind of injustice.

Or you might frankly admit that you were incompetent and couldn't help it.

I have seen men discharged under all sorts of conditions and have observed that, while the majority of them believe they have been treated unjustly, a small minority just throw up their hands and declare that they themselves were to blame—again the inferiority complex!

I don't know which attitude is worse; to blame others, or to blame yourself. Both are wrong.

Now you can see perfectly well that if you are dealing with God alone, you don't have to worry about the complicated things which you never could solve anyway.

All you have to do is to look to God for the reason. In other words, you turn your whole thought away from this complicated mess of speculation, and toward perfection.

I warn you in advance that this is not easy.

The hardest thing we can do does not lie in any physical activity, but in thought. When, in the midst of disaster, where quite possibly you don't know where the next cent is coming from, to sit still and turn your thought toward just an idea—this is very difficult.

Yet the instant you do this, your whole problem is solved.

One of the first things that experience teaches us is that if we are afraid, our fear is communicated in what seems an uncanny manner, and the people we are afraid of come down upon us. Also, others that we have forgotten come down upon us. Fear attracts trouble. When we are backed up against a wall and begin to face those phantoms, they vanish. Nobody can really get us.

Then again, the mere assertion of courage gives us the serenity which helps to bring back our wits and to inspire others with confidence. Thus we make ourselves valuable, and, being valuable, we can make bargains. Our stock goes up in proportion as our courage rises. Our asset is our ability to serve.

The only real mystery about all this is as I have stated that thought is communicated everywhere, like radio energy. This is not always apparent because our senses are not tuned to it, but we know it is so by long experience. We are all knit together in a common spiritual brotherhood. There is a universal mind.

With God as your employer, what an enormous leverage you get! In ordinary business life, when you make a mistake in your work, you don't hold the idea that you are an incompetent. You bluff it out, secretly resolved not to let that mistake occur again.

You do not bother the head of the firm with importunate pleadings. You don't go into his office every day and flatter him. You don't look to him either for sympathy or for help. If you did these things, you would expect to be discharged. If you went about crying all the time that you were no good, the whole office would be down on you. Besides, everybody would begin to believe you. Just as God

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is your father, so also he is your employer. There is nothing that God is not.

You know that if you are going to hold your job, you must not only respect yourself, but also the job. You know that if you work hard, mind your own business, and try to improve yourself all the time, your employer is not going to discharge you. More than this, you know that he is dependent upon you by so much as you become competent. You don't have to bother particularly about yourself, but only about how far you can advance the total interest of your firm.

That is precisely the way it is with God. When you meet with reverses, when you make mistakes (sins), you know that God is watching you, not because he could n't replace you if he had to, but because he takes a personal interest in you. Don't you see that it is to his interest to do this? He is n't going to let you go because you make mistakes. He is infinitely patient with you, if you are trying to make your work better. That is all that is necessary.

He has a place for everybody. The only condition imposed upon all is that they shall try to make their work better.

It 's your work that counts, and not you. Personality is nothing only so far as it has a bearing on your work.

God is looking for results alone. He needs you.

It is an enormous mistake to suppose that God is vain, and he expects to be praised all the time. God is infinite. He does n't need your praise; he needs your service. He knows that you are praising him by working for him. He is not fooled by your pretentions. He is patient with you in your moments of greatest despair, because he knows that these moments are temporary and that you will come back. He generally lets you alone to come back yourself. What good would it do if he helped you to come back every time you got this way?

It would just weaken you.

When anything happens to you that you don't understand, do not question God; question yourself.

If your car breaks down on the road, you do not curse at the maker. You find out what is the matter with the car.

You know what the car can do. And if you know that about a well known car, how much more do you know it about your Creator!

It is certainly astonishing how blind people are to the simplest rules laid down by God. It is n't the ones who are talking about him, or singing hymns to him, or trying to represent him, who are always to be trusted; but it 's the ones who are working for him in whatever field they may be.

That is why there are so many unknown heroes.

Remember this: Meditation, thinking about God, prayer, contemplation—are all so necessary to help us understand God; but we should be very careful indeed not to over-indulge in this sort of thing, as a kind of spiritual luxury. Prayer is always answered, but only in one way: by the solution of your problem in thought. Praying to have some difficulty solved in the way you think it should be solved is worse than useless. Praying to *know why* there is such a difficulty will always be answered. *Want to know* is always followed by *Here it is.*

Many well intentioned people have yielded to this temptation, to depend on God. In time of great stress I have often yielded to this temptation—to seek solace from the Bible, to use up too much of my time in just seeking after God. It is of course necessary to do that, and to do it all the time as a kind of habit. But beware of doing nothing else.

The very best prayer in the world is an effort to do better. In trouble, instead of crying to God for help, it is well to sit down quite calmly and make an interior diagnosis of one's self, sparing one's self not one whit. That is where you make your gains.

Great help in doing this comes from the conviction that God is perfection. When this is understood, it follows that any imperfection cannot be God, and

this gives one an insight into one's own errors. Half the battle is knowing how you have failed. *A mistake should never be regretted, no matter how bad it seems.* We should, of course, fully understand how we have sinned, but the fact that we do understand it as a sin makes it a certainty that in time we shall get rid of it. Patience! We must not be discouraged if we commit the same sin over and over. Little by little we shall get the best of it.

As for our faith in God as a support—by this I mean bread and butter—we have only to study the words of Christ. He made it plain to us just what sort of an employer God is.

Perhaps the best way to strengthen our faith in God is to go back over our own lives and see that he has never failed us. We are all right Now, are we not? Well, we were always all right then, and those moments when we thought we were very badly off—now that we view them—were really not so bad as we thought. Never forget that God is love.

And this is not all. For, as a matter of truth, there is no past or future. So that, when we view those so-called past moments, we see that they are present moments and that God is preserving us constantly, and we just think of the past and future without knowing that it is actually a part of the present.

CHAPTER X

THE GREAT GIFT

WHAT I have written here about the danger of indulging too much in the luxury of "spiritual gluttony" is true only when considered from one angle. The comparison I have made is based on the assumption that one is an employee of God in a business sense. And in this sense it is undoubtedly true that one can serve God best by attending strictly to one's own work and not allowing one's self to be led away by such spiritual gluttony. Viewed from this angle, we see a very large proportion of men and women who may be called unconscious agents of God. They are truly religious, without knowing it. Many of them may be agnostics; most of them know nothing about spiritual matters and care less. They are too busy. The fact that they have not familiarized themselves with traditional religion, with forms and terms, and have never thought much about either God or religion, and possibly that they seldom go to church—all this is of small consequence compared with the fact that they

are on their jobs. They display their unconscious faith in God by their lives. Almost all of them are forgetful of self. We are thrilled at intervals by the story of some obscure telegraph operator who sticks to his post and loses his life, or by some girl who freely gives her own life that others may be saved.

But there are diversities of gifts. We cannot judge other men by what we are. Some of us, as St. Theresa suggests, are standard-bearers, and others are in the ranks. Some of us have special gifts for spiritual insight. If we have, then it is our duty to extend these gifts.

Any faculty becomes atrophied if not used. Detachment from all material things is therefore not only a spiritual but a practical material necessity. Attachment means exclusiveness. Exclusiveness means excessive use of one faculty at the expense of all others. To live dangerously is by no means bad advice. Spiritual faculties must be constantly exercised. It is not bodily exercise that matters; it is the exercise of *all* the faculties of the soul. Thinking the same thought exclusively is deterioration. To be free, to be unattached, is to share in all things, to be partners with God. Freedom is merely an absence of dependence upon material things.

To serve others materially, to minister to their wants, to care for them, to give one's life to them, is

generally considered the noblest work a human being can do. But this is not so.

It is very much higher to abandon others and serve God alone. It is the spirit that quickeneth. The life of the spirit is far above the life of the body. The creative act must be kept distinct from the sensual act. In too many cases they are mixed up. By learning to live the life of the spirit, by abandoning all anxiety and serving God in spirit, our service thus becomes externalized in material work. An examination of the lives of those who have dedicated themselves to God will show quite plainly that they were almost invariably hard workers, and that their work was of a severely practical nature. St. Theresa was highly skilled in household matters. Not only was she a fine cook, but her needlework was remarkable. There was practically nothing connected with the management of a household with which she was not thoroughly familiar. Mme. Guyon is another example.

St. Paul was undoubtedly one of the greatest executives in the world. St. Augustine of Hippo was likewise a great executive, and his business routine was very full and exacting.

The daily routine of any of the Popes of Rome would stagger any ordinary business man.

The truth is that the spiritualization of thought always increases in a most marvelous manner one's

capacity for hard and continuous labor, no matter whether this is manual or mental. The vast majority of those unconscious agents of God I have referred to, whose thought may not have been spiritualized, are therefore under this limitation.

It is apparently given to but few of us—if we may judge from appearance and history—to have the gift of spiritual development. For this reason alone it is important that we do not abuse this privilege, and that, above all things, whatever capacity for spiritual development has been given us, we should employ it, not for our own peace and comfort, but solely as employees of God.

Our spiritual exercises therefore should be regulated to increase our efficiency. But here again another distinction should be insisted upon. This efficiency is not for the purpose of converting others. We have nothing to do with the world, and this includes others. We have only to carry out God's intention, his direction, as we come gradually to increase in wisdom and understanding. The reason is that, if we confine ourselves solely to the things of this world, even when we do so with the best intentions, that is to say, by giving ourselves to the service of the world, we are thus limiting ourselves, and this too upon the assumption that we can do God's work in the world better than he can do it himself. This is

a common error on the part of reformers, priests, and altruists generally, and is due to a lack of faith on their part. They become wholly taken up with the development of their human personalities, and believe that by using these human personalities for the good of others they are doing God's will. This may be so, for no sincere intention is ever lost. But all this effort is on a much lower plane than that attitude which surrenders completely to the will of God and leaves it to God to determine what one shall be directed to do.

At certain periods it is just as necessary for us to abandon others as it is to serve them. Indeed it is just as necessary for us to abandon ourselves, especially when we come to see that our spiritual exercises are leading us only into a state of bliss without other result.

If it now be asked, How can we know? the answer is that this constitutes the whole of the search for God. We learn little by little. A great advance is made when we come to understand that, so far as our relationship with God is concerned, the individual is supreme, and that the Individual is responsible to God alone, is employed by God alone. By keeping these two thoughts steadily in mind, we shall overcome much, and our progress will be rapid. We shall learn how much to spiritualize our thought.

Meditation, contemplation, and recollection, allied with constant prayer, the searching of one's self for errors, and the study of the scriptures—all these agencies are brought into play, not for self-indulgence, but to widen our understanding of God's purpose. In this manner we become truly agents of God.

In doing all this, we are not restricted in any way in our occupation, or in the medium through which we advance in our understanding. Any church may be our habitat. Guided always by the spirit of universal spiritual love, we enter into all communions, we are a stranger at no table. I do not mean to imply by this that we necessarily go from one to the other. I mean only that we live consciously in that atmosphere in which it has pleased God to place us. For instance, one may live in California or Florida, in Maine, New York, or Alabama, and yet be a true American. Similarly one may become a Roman Catholic, a Jew, or a Baptist, and still be a follower of God. It does not matter. I have known true mystics in all denominations. Jesus did not hesitate to wash the feet of his disciples, symbolically revealing by this act that he could serve any one.

It may be asked: how is it possible to be free to deal with God alone, and at the same time to surrender one's self to a particular ritual, to a communion

specialized and with rigid rules for the communicants? The answer is that the Individual always holds dominion over every form of worship, no matter how highly symbolical that form may be. I can be truly obedient to this form, and surrender only that part of myself which has become spiritualized in union with the spiritualization revealed by that form. In other words, my union with God is accomplished in any way that seems best. Thus we have Buddha, Mohammed, Confucius, Socrates, Moses, Abraham, Christ, as symbolic representations of different forms. And in the gradual spiritualization of our thought we must, I think, come to see that the Christ Spirit is more comprehensive than any other, or to be more exact, that it is the ALL spirit, complete and universal in its application to all the striving for God we can feel. The Christ spirit is the imperishable link which binds us to God; that is, it is the gate through which we enter upon our following of God. If it were not for the Christ spirit, in our lowest moments we would abandon ourselves to perdition. The consciousness of our own utter mortality, that is, our complete sin, would be too much for us. But in these very low moments, the recollection of Christ saves us. It is not so much because he is the Great Friend, it is not so much because he sympathizes with us (for sympathy is dangerous always), as it is that he revives our own

courage, so that we may assert our own sonship with God. We see that our bodies, as corrupt as they are, and our sins, as manifold as they are, are not ourselves. We see that within ourselves lies the embryo of immortality, and he gives us good hope that this can be aroused by our own attitude of surrender of the body and a kind of looking up toward him. We are sustained by the conviction of Grace.

Yet even in our attitude toward the Christ spirit there is danger. This danger consists always in our weariness of soul, which inclines us to lean on Him. Those wonderful words of his, "Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest," ring in our ears. Is it too much to ask of human nature that we should not take advantage of them? We *must* lean on Christ, it is true. But to what extent? We see about us constantly pitiful examples of misguided people who lean on others and are thereby wrecked. Christ himself guards those who truly love him in this respect. Not only can we trust him to lead us, but, on this higher plane, we come to welcome that suffering which alone can widen our understanding. This suffering seems now to be necessary although we shall come to a fuller understanding where it will pass from us.

CHAPTER XI

LOVE AND THE MORTAL SENSE

It becomes true for us, then, that when we seem most alone and deserted, when we are wandering about in a veritable wilderness of desolation, this is the hour when God is closest to us.

We must come finally to see that suffering, no matter what earthly form it takes, cannot be punishment. Long ago we have relinquished the erroneous thought that God punishes people for their sins. So far as this mortal life is concerned, we know that it will end of itself. We know that matter is visible to us only because our own senses are built of the same illusive stuff. But we cannot overcome this illusion except as this mortal sense of things is replaced by a spiritual sense of things. And this discomfort of replacement is what we term suffering. It is really a constant realinement, a constant silting away of old material, rising to an understanding of the permanent, of God himself. It is inevitable that this process should be gradual, and that it should be limited.

Perhaps our greatest lack is our lack of the spirit of obedience.

Through the Cloud of Unknowing we get the divine glimpses of immortality. All other things—friends, family, money, desires, everything earthly—may fluctuate and fade before our mortal eyes, but this vision constantly recurs. It is this that strengthens our faith. Our guilt falls away from us in diminishing recessions. Our own mortal selves merge into countless other mortal selves, and toward all these (humanity) we feel no longer any enmity or resentment, but only universal love. We do not try to change them nor alter them; we only try to bring our own internal thought into alinement with God. In this manner we come to penetrate under the surfaces of things. We see the real selves behind the masks of human personalities. We come to understand more fully than ever the great charge of Christ, that there are only two commandments, to love God and your neighbor. And that these commandments fulfil all the law and the prophets.

This love is not mortal. It has naught to do with human affection, with carnal things. There is no sob stuff to it. It is removed from false sympathy. It is supremely exact, always perfect and unfailing in its manifestations. It is God, and therefore heals all things instantly. Perfect Love casteth out fear.

Fear is the great destroying element. Love is the infinite constructive element. Love is the fulfilment of the law. As you abandon gradually your earthly desires, your false gods, and come to replace all these illusions with the understanding of universal love, through you, by just the measure you have learned, all defects are healed. From the spiritual point of view, disease—of whatever nature—is a gap in the consciousness. Fill this gap with the power of universal love, and the disease vanishes. This, I repeat, is not supernormal. It is mysterious only to those whose thought is earth-bound. We know now also that it is not only useless but wrong for us to argue with these good people about something which—using only those terms they know—they never could become convinced. This, we rapidly come to see, is not because of any superiority we have over them. Spiritually they really, actually know. This is proved in so many cases by their lives, which often belie their utterance. I have seen men rail at God (probably their God of tradition, man-made) and scoff at the slightest suggestion of miracles or anything suggesting the Life beyond, who in their daily lives are saints. When we argue with their false selves, their human masks, we are convicting ourselves of ignorance. We never need to argue but only to love. It is a human tendency on our part, when our hearts go out

to them, when we long to help them. They may easily be much better, much further along, than we, and we may not know it. We forget that God is supreme, that God is infinite, and that we are, in our terms, finite.

My thought about Nietzsche is that he was right from the standpoint of chaos, but not from that of real Love (God). Also if we apply relativity to this problem, we understand that man makes his own universe. This is determined not by any conscious act of will. It is merely an intention. It is the madmen who count, as Socrates said. Nietzsche was a madman. He contributed enormously to the imaginative possibilities of the human soul.

If again it be asked, How can we know anything if we have only finite terms? my reply is once again, in two words. Try it.

It may be thought that the two positions I have indicated—first that of simply sticking to one's job and doing one's work as an employee of God; and second, that of spiritual contemplation and Union, and holding one's self entirely apart from the world—are inconsistent, and irreconcilable. That is only because they represent different stages of the moral attitude, in its progress toward God. If we keep to the thought that the individual is supreme, and that the

individual is directed by God to do what he has been appointed to do, then we shall not go wrong.

In short, you are to take nobody's word for it. You are to be obedient where you see that to be obedient is the only way. You are to be guided alone by your sincere desire to enter into the kingdom of God, to become a citizen of the City of Perfection. The sincerity and purity of this desire will be your pillar of light. You will need no other. No matter how many times you stumble and fall, you will always get up again and go on. Your bleeding feet will not matter. Think of the countless men working in mines, of those who climb mountains, of those who subject themselves to every form of self-immolation, and you will come to see that your mortal self is nothing.

We may extol and offer the highest human respect to the memory of Florence Nightingale, as one of world's great humanitarians, one who gave her services freely for the alleviation of human suffering. But we would not compare her with Theresa. It is not Paul's work as a spiritual healer that we magnify, but his sublime spiritual utterances, which give us the key to entrance into the kingdom. The miracles of Christ are fully and spiritually understood by those who have sufficiently spiritualized their

thought. But far above these healings is the Christ spirit, through which we gain a sense of the Peace that passeth all understanding.

We must come to see at last that our power to *relieve* others carries with it the risk of hindering them in their progress. It is the spiritual understanding of Christ's resurrection that counts the most, because the nothingness of mortality, in comparison with the infinite sweep of immortality, can be expressed in no other way. We help others most by spiritualizing our own thought, by adjusting ourselves to the things of God. We do this in our own individual manner. Truth, being within us, must be seen within us.

The difference between fatalism and free will lies entirely in the sources of thought. Once let thought start on its way, and nothing can stop it until it is externalized in some outward form or action. It is along this line that fatalism is inexorable and undeniable. But free will always lies in the original choice in thought. And this initial decision does not lie so much in any deliberate, premeditated thought, as it does in a longing for something better, as expressed in the exclamation, "Lord, help thou my unbelief!" As soon as we thus determine to turn away from the flesh, and—with possibly many doubts and misgivings—falter and hesitate but nevertheless do declare our intention, help then comes. And it need

not be the help which merely bolsters us up, makes things easy, but on the contrary it is the help which shows us how to help ourselves. Thus we begin our long journey upward. We die daily and rise again, as often as we die.

Faith, Hope, and Love

Practically speaking, we attain our eventual freedom through the gateway of Faith, and in conjunction with Hope and Love. This Trinity comprises the sum total of our highest spiritual intelligence; yet strange as this may seem, these three great realities are but faintly understood.

Belief in God can come only through understanding. This produces faith. As soon as we have a little faith, we then begin to see God as the Absolute Perfection. Thus we begin to form the habit of leaving all things to him. He directs us. We believe in him as God the Father, as God the employer, as the spirit of Truth and Life, and in particular as Love. We refer all things to him. We come to understand him, of course, through the Reality of the Spirit of of Christ, which is the link that binds us to him in understanding, through our own cumulative experience. From the moment that we attain even this small measure of faith, our sense of responsibility ceases.

We no longer attempt to reform the world, but, as I have suggested, our chief concern is to maintain ourselves with as little inconvenience to others as possible, to be "on our own." This is a large order, because it means actually that we are to mind our own business and keep ourselves unspotted from the world. Hope leads us on. Hope revivifies us constantly after each stumble. Hope blends with Faith and leads to the proper understanding of universal Love. We come to see, by practical tests, that when we love, instead of hate or envy, both our spiritual and material returns are unlimited. Our capacities increase; our work multiplies. "By their fruits ye shall know them." Nothing short of spiritual love can change any one's temperament.

Yet love is so rarely understood (it not being an earthly affair of carnal attachments or desires) that I venture to recommend to the reader a careful perusal of that little but all-powerful book of Drummond's "The Greatest Thing in the World."

I also venture to quote from Emmanual Swedenborg's "Divine Love and Wisdom" as follows:

> Man knows that there is such a thing as love, but he does not know what love is. He knows that there is such a thing as love from common speech, as when it is said, he loves me, a king loves his subjects, and subjects love their king, a husband loves his wife, a mother her children, and conversely:

also this or that one loves his country, his fellow citizens, his neighbor; and likewise of things abstracted from person, as when it is said, one loves this or that thing. But although the word love is so universally used, hardly anybody knows what love is. And because one is unable when he reflects upon it, to form to himself any idea or thought about it, he says either that it is not anything, or that it is merely something flowing in from sight, hearing, touch or intercourse with others, and thus affecting him. He is wholly unaware that love is his very life; not only the general life of his whole body, and the general life of all his thoughts, but also the life of all their particulars.

In connection with this, not once, but over and over again, studying them very carefully until the full meaning is gathered, the eleventh chapter of Hebrews and the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians are recommended. I venture again to suggest that we are too likely to think we know a particular passage, merely because we have read it casually. These great utterances, allied with the saying of Christ, Love thy God and thy neighbor, are the whole of the spiritual life.

We first believe, perhaps only a little.

Hope keeps reëstablishing our belief as we go stumbling along, until the firm structure of our Faith is built up. We then come to see that Love is the Whole of everything.

CHAPTER XII

WE EARN WHAT WE GET, AND WHAT WE GET WE HAVE

As employees of God we do not actually earn anything ourselves. All that we have comes directly from God, and when we seem to have it, it does not really belong to us. There is no such thing as actual possession. That in itself is a part of the greater delusion.

If, at any time, you have a secret feeling of envy at the sight of another man who seems to have many possessions, dismiss the thought from your mind. It is not true.

The only way in which you actually possess anything is what place it occupies in your internal consciousness.

You possess nothing at all except what you have previously thought of. This thought took the form of a desire for this particular thing. In time the desire was materialized.

Your thought, in all cases, determines what you have. If that is true (you say) why is it that we do not have everything we want?

Because our thought is limited.

We do not originate our thought. It rises internally in our consciousness, and is a part of the universal mind. A desire for anything at all is projected upon the plane of our internal consciousness, and by an inevitable law, it is eventually materialized (apparently externally) in precise mathematical proportion to the force of the desire.

We have seen men, in all ages and climates, overcome the most apparently insuperable obstacles and eventually achieve their desires.

It is NOT what we ourselves create that counts; it is what we release in ourselves, through faith, what we allow to enter by our own understanding—this is what really counts.

We therefore cannot possibly possess anything, but it always possesses us, in exact proportion to the space it occupies in our internal consciousness. Do you doubt this? The evidence lies everywhere about you.

We are possessed, not possessors. Never forget that.

If a young man drives a motor-car eight hours a day, does he possess the car for that period, or does the car possess him?

Does the beautiful scenery possess him?

Do his family possess him?

Be sure that the man who possesses himself is he who is not possessed by anything else.

That is the crucial part of this great Delusion, THAT WE EARN WHAT WE GET AND WHAT WE GET WE HAVE.

When you see some one else with something you want but have n't got, remember that it may possess them, not they it.

Then what are we working for? If nothing amounts to anything, or if anything amounts to nothing, what is the use?

At any given moment, you cannot say what you actually know, but only what you think you know. This disposes of the entire system of education, making it only a shifting sand.

It must be evident, even upon the slightest meditation, that your true possessions are what you think, and that, inasmuch as what you seem to have (materially) is only the result of what you have previously thought, then you necessarily exclude yourself from everything of which you have not thought.

Do you not see, therefore, that if another man has something which you have not, it is only because you have not thought about it and he has?

One of the most extraordinary tricks which this great delusion plays upon us is the minor illusion of comfort we get in viewing the property of a stranger. If you drive out into the country, you will suddenly glimpse some wonderful residence and exclaim to

yourself, "How I wish I owned that place!" The probability is that the man who first built it had the same thought, and then, being disillusionized, moved away to give place to some other victim.

These fleeting desires which float over our consciousness as we travel about are very much like the seed cast on barren ground; they do not take root. When a desire is strong enough and the soil is right, it does take root, sprout, and give forth. Results always follow thought, in exact proportion to the force of the thought.

An idea has the right of way over everything; nothing can stop it.

The reason why it is commonly stated that selfishness is bad, is simply because a desire which springs from selfishness is based on something which is fleeting. If for example you desire something for your pleasure, there is nothing intrinsically wicked or wrong in that desire; it is only that by giving thought to it you inevitably obtain a result that is founded upon sand. But if your desire is for something permanent, something real, then it will finally be materialized in an outward form which internally will have a spiritual reality. There is a higher selfishness.

It is a seemingly mysterious law, but in reality a perfectly simple and absolute one, that God takes care of us in proportion as our thought is AWAY

from the ephemeral; that is, is concentrated on the permanent things, instead of the fleeting.

To overcome discord, *any trouble whatsoever*, turn away from it, deny it. It was on the basis of the sternest practical necessity and complete understanding that Christ exclaimed to Satan, "Get thee behind me!"

If you think in terms of a Ford car, you will have a Ford car.

If you think in terms of reality, that is, elevate your thought so that you carry about with you the firm faith that you are God-controlled, then you will either have a Ford or a Rolls-Royce, in strict accordance with the great spiritual law.

There is no limit to the supply. It is only you who limit it in your thought.

When you are disillusioned, and understand the Truth, then, at any given moment, all the forces of the universe are working through you. In such a case as this, if you were the apparent "possessor" of a million dollars it would mean nothing to you. You might easily be a millionaire or not. All these things are quite immaterial.

In other words, you are always supplied with precisely what is necessary for you, in accordance with the manner in which your internal thought has previously shaped itself in your consciousness.

So far as fear and worry are concerned, they have been written about so often that it is only necessary for me to say here that there is one rule against them which I have found the most effective.

No matter how desperate the situation may seem, one thing is certain. If there is any chance to weather it, this chance is greatly lessened by worry and fear. If then you are afraid of public opinion, remember that public opinion will itself condemn you much more quickly if you are a coward than if you are not. You can fail at anything, but if you keep your courage, public opinion will always support you. The one thing which public opinion will not tolerate is cowardice.

It is therefore evident that worry and fear must be set aside although in the beginning they spurred you on.

Suppose one is ill, what then?

One almost always is when finances fail. The relationship between one's health and one's fortunes is very intimate.

The answer is still the same. One must be calm. One must not worry. One must not be overcome with fear. One must feel guiltless.

Is it difficult? It is.

But in these matters one learns by experience. One does not learn everything at once.

And there is now an unknown factor, impossible to reckon with, impossible to speculate or argue about, which always determines the situation and that is:

When you follow these directions, you are saved.

The Unknown saves you. The Unknown always steps in and carries you through.

It may be very difficult, for those who are in an incomplete state of spiritual knowledge, to tell why this is so.

But it is always so.

CHAPTER XIII

SIN

THE fact that we have nothing to say about what we do is established by history, experience, and thought.

The nature of sin has constantly stirred up the most intense controversy. In the first chapter of Genesis we have the record of man's fall—a pure allegory. Many religions and many peoples have not recognized sin. The Greeks had no idea of it. Buddhism is free from it. In its intensity it is peculiar to the Hebrews. Good and evil are custom made.

Very recently sin has been glossed over by many spiritual leaders. By this I mean that its claims have been disputed. The ancient God is now being replaced by a God of love. When hell lost its reality, sin began to shrink.

We do not renounce vice because it is immoral but because it is uninteresting. There is nothing so monotonous as drunkenness and indecency.

In order to understand sin, several things must be considered:

1. The Law.
2. The guilty conscience.
3. The claims of society.

Many have tried to separate religion and morality. And from this have grown vast difficulties. All through the history of the world there have occasionally risen individuals, and indeed sects, who have claimed spiritual freedom to the extent of committing the wildest excesses.

In Cardinal Newman's "Anglican Difficulties," quoted by Lecky, he writes:

> The Church holds that it were better for sun and moon to drop from heaven, for the earth to fail, and for the many millions who are on it to die of starvation in extremest agony, so far as temporal affliction goes, than that one soul, I will not say should be lost, but should commit one venial sin, should tell one wilful untruth, though it harmed no one, or steal one farthing without excuse.

At first sight, this extraordinary passage seems to be not alone the veriest nonsense, but a really damnable doctrine in itself. And yet, in passing judgment upon it, we must carefully separate the material from the spiritual meaning.

So far as our practical affairs are concerned, we know nothing but what we see; and if life on this material planet has any meaning at all, and we are concerned with lofty thoughts about it, we must then work

for the greatest material good for the greatest number —here and now—without regard to any hereafter. The whole problem of life then simmers down to living here as long as we can in good health, physical comfort, and intellectual enjoyment. Viewed from this standpoint, Cardinal Newman's statement is ridiculous.

But if we believe that the world we see before us is a world of pure illusion, that matter has no real or permanent existence, that spiritual ideas are the only reality, then a glimmer of Cardinal Newman's abstract meaning begins to penetrate. He has used an extreme illustration, purposely making the sin a trifling one in the eyes of the so-called world, in order to show that all sin, so regarded, heavy or light, is the same.

If we are to understand what Cardinal Newman meant, or indeed to understand sin at all, we must first define it in such a way that it will stand out clearly in our consciousness.

It is so important to do this that it deeply concerns the lives of each one of us, and this in all of their daily practical aspects. Most of us fail or not, according to our conception of sin. We are always in doubt about what we shall do. It is this indecision which causes our failure. No one of us would shrink from doing anything, no matter how painful, if we

knew it was the right thing to do. The difficulty comes in knowing.

Sin is really no part of us. Sin springs from desire. Anything we desire, no matter what (except God), is sin. The extent of our desire for anything marks the extent of the power it has over us. We serve it by this much. In Biblical terms it is a false god.

If we start out with the proposition (and never afterward abandon it) that God is perfect, we shall then rapidly come to understand the nature of sin.

To understand God and truly serve him it is essential to keep one's self free; that is, detached from any formula or system. Many of the higher mathematicians yield to this pressure and have failed in knowing God because they have gone after strange idols and adopted some system.

But if we think of God, first as being unknown in the sense that in our limited vision we can never do any more than glimpse him; second, as infinite, perfect, as Love—we then have an infinite subject for meditation, because there is never any end to it. Mathematics is the one science which strips our thoughts bare of all material débris and aims at abstract perfection. Thus God and mathematics are very close.

Sin is ignorance. We never can define the nature

of sin absolutely, because we are all living in it, that is, living in ignorance; but we have made a long step forward when we see this, and when we see that the only possible way to get rid of sin is to understand God. God replaces sin in our consciousness.[1]

As for my own conduct, I must, however, act in all things like a free agent, as one who would act who is not only the son of the Father but the employee of God; and as if I had been sent on a journey into a far country, acting on my own, being governed always by my highest intelligence, and not dependent upon my employer or constantly seeking his help. If God is thus thrust aside, and we go on alone, how does our attitude differ from that of the agnostic? Or the scientist? It differs as much as heaven and earth differ, for Love has entered in. All the time we are conscious of close companionship with God through

[1] The practical problem of sin in our daily lives is not here questioned. It is a hard and seemingly real condition that we must meet. It actually lies in our thought (Mat. 15: 19) but so fixed are we in the material dream, that this truth cannot be comprehended except through self-searching, repentance, prayer. The understanding comes only through a definite process of conversion, as I have shown in a former work ("Spiritual Vagabond"), through the revelation of Christ in the consciousness. If you are now confronted by a spiritual crisis, being overcome by this sense of sin or failure to meet conditions surrounding you, drop everything else but your Bible. Read especially John and the Pauline epistles. Study the word Grace (see Scofield and Hastings Dictionary) and do not hesitate to go to a Director. By this I mean go to someone you know for help: your priest, your pastor or your friend.

Christ while we never forget that our loyalty to our Creator makes it essential that we should develop our own resources, and not become eye-servants. The reward that Christ mentions is not material; it is far beyond all this. It is not the reward of a cheap winner of prizes; it is true understanding, spiritual unity with the Infinite. Once having this initial understanding with God about our conduct and aim, does it not become plain that we cannot sin? Our errors are merely the errors of one who is constantly learning as he proceeds. It is only through these errors (chastenings) that we can make any progress at all.

We overcome a temptation by removing the thought of it from our internal consciousness, and we do this by walking with God; that is, by being God-controlled.

Of course the progress is slow; we often have to retrace our steps; but even this is an illusion. We think it is slow, but in reality we don't know how fast it is.

There is an old saying that if a man were perfect he would not know it.

Evil has no existence. The best men in all ages have shown that. God is good.

To overcome temptation, therefore, do not resist it; let it overcome itself. Keep going back to God each time; never fail to go back to God, and these hideous things which, indulged in, give you so much

pain, will drop away from you. They are unrealities. When you see them as such, you will be walking with God more and more.

As for being tempted, I do not suppose that temptation can be resisted. Christ was probably the only man who was successful in this respect.

The fact that temptation presents itself is certain evidence that it will overcome its victim.

We have here a problem which is, as we view it from above, both external and internal. In addition to the perfect man, Christ, we have a record of men who have apparently resisted temptation. Joseph for example was such a man. In the thirty-ninth chapter of Genesis it is told how he resisted Potiphar's wife who came to him in the form of a temptation. But we must remember that a situation is here described from the outside. Joseph's purity of thought made the internal conditions such with him that the temptation could not rise in his consciousness. It was no part of him, and therefore it was easy for him to overcome it. When people come to us and say, "Will you do this or that?" our doing it depends entirely upon what hidden desire to do it may have been concealed within us. I have seen men in brothels who remained entirely unaffected by the presence of scarlet women. It is a matter of history and common observation that men who indulge themselves with women

will grow rapidly tired of one and replace her with another. The history of Kings is one long record of this. When a man grows tired of one woman (as for example in the case of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn), she no longer has power to tempt him. Nevertheless his capacity to yield is even stronger than ever, his inordinate desire being merely transferred from one object to another. We see from this that a temptation which might be described as one would be no temptation at all. It depends entirely upon internal desire.

So little is the nature of temptation understood that a long line of mystics have resorted to the most terrible expedients to overcome it. In one sense there is nothing more immoral than a total abstainer.

Materialization is certain to follow thought. Christ said that if a man looked on a woman, he had already committed sin.

Temptation is internal. It rises up from the consciousness. The outward act of yielding is the necessary consequence.

Yielding to temptation is simply the doing of something which we believe to be wrong. It is always possible that it may not be wrong. In any event, the question as to whether it is or is not wrong may be deeply imbedded in tradition.

The real sins lie in thought and have little to do

with the outward code made necessary in order that society may protect itself. They are the miasmatic growths which spread upon the waters of the soul, because of our acquiescence in the great lies of priest-made custom. They are suspicion, envy, hurry, hatred, covetousness, ambition, carnal selfishness, all these being the result of worldly attachments. From these issue all the externalized crimes committed.

The sin against the Holy Ghost is committed when you know a thing to be wrong and then do it. There are cases where you are in doubt—but that is different.

There are Pharisees to-day, as of old, who adhere to the strict letter of the law, and are really guilty of doing horrible things because they think they are horrible. The fact is that so long as we follow the law of love and let everything else go, we shall come very nearly to doing right in all things.

No matter what the temptation may be, it is first necessary to understand it in order to overcome it. Yet, as I have indicated, what seems a sin may not be one at all. Sometimes a boy will run away from home, and this will seem wrong. But a large part of our fiction is based on the idea that boys run away from home, disobey their parents, and then return rich and successful.

Sin is lawbreaking. But if laws are made for certain narrow purposes, then the sin may be justifiable. Christ said:

"The sabbath was made for man and not man for the sabbath."

Yet it is comparatively easy to define sin if one understands the difference between reality and unreality. Sin is always unreality. Wrote St. Augustine:

> We are, I suppose, agreed that all things with which our bodily senses acquaint us are incapable of abiding unchanged for a single moment, but, on the contrary, are moving and in perpetual transition and have no present reality—that is, to use the language of Latin philosophy, do not *exist*.

No matter what the temptation may be, therefore, and whether it is really sinful or not, it can always be understood by this fleeting quality.

Sin destroys itself. To meet evil face to face, to deny it fearlessly, is the only way to overcome it; that is, to rid one's self of it. Any kind of prohibition merely extends the power of evil, which really has no power except what we give it. The Jews defeated themselves through laws. Every rut has a dead end.

We are not guilty, but nevertheless we must always suffer for the consequences of sin, if by sin we understand an attachment to the ephemeral, the temporal,

instead of the permanent, the real. And that is all there is to the problem. You cannot serve God and Mammon, cannot destroy yourself daily by sin, by fleeting things, and then expect to be permanent. Now your body is one thing and your soul is another. You often hate your body and the things it does, and those things, in your remorse, you call sin. You tried not to do them, but when the time came you yielded. You are willing to do penance now. Many mystics and ascetics did penance all their lives, with the belief that they were always sinning, that the mere act of being alive on this mortal plane was in itself a sin; therefore they were perpetually beating themselves, lying on thorns, and so on.

It is now, however, coming to be recognized that the body is, or ought to be, the temple of the Holy Ghost, and that nothing which God has made can be utterly bad, or even a little bad. We are beginning to see the truth much more plainly than we did.

As evil, which rises in our thoughts and makes us commit so-called sins, destroys itself, in this process we undoubtedly suffer, and very greatly. But as we come to understand the truth we suffer less and less, until finally we achieve tranquillity, or rather it is more correct to say that we come into tranquillity. How can this be accomplished?

The first phase of this understanding is, as I have pointed out, the certainty that when temptation presents itself we must of necessity yield to it.

That means, does it not, that if we wish to avoid temptation, the conditions must be such that temptation does not even present itself? Is this difficult? Not at all. Sin is our erroneous acknowledgment of evil.[1] We overcome it through prayer.

[1] No wonder, then, that Mysticism, as such, has tended to deny all positive character to Evil. We have already found how strongly this is the case with the prince of Mystic philosophers, Plotinus . . . Augustine, ten years after his conversion can write: "Evil is no substance"—condensed from Von Hugel, St. Catherine. Vol. II, p. 293.

CHAPTER XIV

YOU ARE NOT GUILTY

"But," you exclaim, "how about my actual problem? It is all very well to talk about your principles. They may or may not be true. I am willing to admit that what you say is true, but how does that help me in my present emergency? I cannot meet my expenses, which are constantly growing. I have others dependent upon me. Disaster confronts me. And yet you tell me to depend entirely upon God the Unknown."

Yes, indeed, and I repeat it.

Remember that the tangle of unrealities with which you have enveloped yourself—quite innocently—is the same tangle for all of us. There is no difference, except possibly in a degree. My problem is yours, and yours is mine. Also, it may surprise you to know that I, who thus write so confidently, am also enmeshed as you are, and this in spite of all my fine ideas.

But there is this difference.

I have a little understanding, which enables me to

see the Truth, even if dimly. It enables me to apprehend all of the Truth, although I can really glimpse but a faint streak of it. And this faint streak has extricated me from places where I was on the verge of self-destruction, and has given me a quite serene understanding of what happiness is.

The very first thing to do is to realize this one fact; namely, that you are not guilty.

Get that fact firmly intrenched in your consciousness. Meditate upon it day and night, check it up with your daily experience, but come to understand it. Nothing which you do or leave undone makes the slightest difference to this universe in the spiritual or real sense. You may be sure of that. Your material problem does not matter. You will easily see that this problem is no problem at all. Day by day you go on, are drawn on by events, and nothing really happens. Bills get paid. If they do not, the world goes on. Your problem is only what you think it is, at any given moment. Therefore it is never any problem. Sin, I repeat, is not guilt. It is ignorance, darkness.

And whatever you believe, that is, whatever kind of a God you have come to believe in, you may be equally certain that he is not revenging himself upon you for what does not matter. If you do something which you come to see has lowered your efficiency,

or you think it has, that does not matter at all to God. Whatever your personal sense of guilt is, it is purely personal with you, and God does not care. Why should he? You can commit any crime that you want to, and it makes no difference with him. True, he is your father, he loves you, but your mortal sense-self has for him no validity.

Naturally, from your own worldly point of view, all this makes a fearful difference with you. This is a matter for you yourself alone. You are the arbiter, not God. You are the judge and jury sitting on your own case. Therefore, when it comes to being guilty, do you not see that you have just as much right to judge yourself for feeling guilty as for the alleged guilt itself? You always have this power of thought-decision.

If, at any given moment, there was not all the chance in the universe to make yourself better, then the universe would be reduced to a chaos.

You can do the same thing over and over again, just as often as you like, but the principle I have laid down will eventually win over all others.

The Truth must prevail. Christ always rises.

Though your brother offend seventy times seven, you must forgive him. You must forgive yourself equally.

That is how we come at last to see the infinite for-

giveness of God. But we only come to see this when we remember, or understand, that with this infinite forgiveness we must be the sole trustee for ourselves. Read the parable of the talents.

The particular sin which you have committed—or think you have committed—offends you grievously. You are so ashamed of yourself that you are afraid to pray.

Time goes on. The memory of your remorse fades. You begin to feel better. You hold up your head. Then suddenly, perhaps without any warning, the temptation comes again, and you yield.

Read Charles Lamb's account of his smoking, and you will get some idea of alternate remorse and repentance. If he lived now he would laugh at himself.

We all know that old saying that the only way to quit is to quit. Therefore, knowing this, when you are still going on, first remorseful, then repentant, then yielding, and this over and over, is it any wonder that you feel guilty?

Now the real truth is that there is a battle on.

"This is the Lord's battle."

That is to say, you are the victim of circumstances. I hasten here to observe, what at this point you should be duly warned against. You are not an object of pity. To pity yourself is only to make matters worse.

What is one to do then?

Nothing. Absolutely nothing.

Wait. "Seek and ye shall find."

Keep searching yourself. Little by little, very, very slowly as it seems, you will see the gain.

And here is an astonishing practical fact. You will discover that by merely ridding yourself of any sense of guilt, you are actually much better able to overcome the thing which originally caused the guilt.

CHAPTER XV

WHERE IT CAME FROM

THE phrase, "I am guilty," has echoed and re-echoed down the ages. It is a hidden sense of one's own guilt which causes us to see guilt in others. Most of the bloody crimes with which the pages of history are stained have been caused by this selfsame sense of guilt, fastened upon us through long eras of spiritual oppression. If we examine it in the cold light of our high intelligence, we come to see quite plainly that it has been one of the great weapons used by high priests and rulers in order to insure the enslavement of the masses. To flourish a club over cowering and impoverished people, to brand them all as guilty, is quite naturally to keep them cowering. There is nothing which takes the heart out of any of us so much as this feeling of personal guilt, and there is nothing which is so absolutely untrue or dishonest. It was precisely this feeling of guilt which Christ rebuked so effectually when the Jews presented a so-called guilty woman before him and suggested that she should be stoned.

Nowhere in the whole record of Christ is there any encouragement of this feeling of guilt. It is true that he rebuked the Pharisees, "blind leaders of the blind." The word "repentance" itself—so falsely represented—means only to change one's mind.

Now that we have advanced so much materially, and our machinery of civilization is what may be termed so "modernized," this sense of guilt has changed its mask. It poses now under the name of personal responsibility, or that of public opinion. We fear that we shall fail in our obligations, and we fear the finger of dread public opinion. Both of these ogres are the unnatural offspring of a sense of guilt.

In its terrible consequences, we see it externalized in the frightful penances of the mystics and ascetics. The contemplation of these self-inflicted punishments, by a long line of introverts, from St. Simeon onward, fills us with pity that so much that is really great and noble should be mixed with so much that is primitive. We see also that these trials, as a part of the record, were necessary. The only possible way in which their unreality could be demonstrated was by living through them. But we now see quite distinctly that the subjugation of the body by physical discipline bears the same relation to true Christianity

that the stocks and the whipping-posts bear to police protection.

This sense of guilt, so well illustrated by the vision of hell-fire held up to us so long by our own preachers—now hardly more than two generations in the past—has kept us back more than any other factor; and even now it is very difficult to dislodge in some of its newest forms, because we are always afraid to give up anything in the nature of what we have come to regard as an attribute of the Almighty. It seems impossible even now, therefore, for any of us to believe, if we believe in God at all, that we are not going to be punished for our so-called sins. And even among those who do not believe, or do not at least profess to believe, we see the same error. The word "penalty," with all that it implies, is firmly grounded in our past and present. To uproot it is a Sisyphean task!

The fact that we still believe in suffering, still so desperately cling to it, is what causes it to appear so often in our consciousness. One of the reasons for this is that the picture of Christ on the Cross is ever before us. There have been plenty of wonderful men and women in the past—a long line of sainted heroes and heroines—who have thought it their sacred duty to suffer themselves, with Christ, through long vigils, literally to live over and over his agony;

and any departure from this continuing moment of agony has been regarded by them as a kind of gap in their spiritual progress. Thus it has come about that in almost every way we contemplate the Christian life we do it from the standpoint of personal guilt and responsibility. This false idea has, in an age of recklessness probably never before been equaled, kept more young people out of the church, and away from the real Christ, than any other influence that could be named.

The New Religion is that Liberty of the Soul which comes from the real understanding of Christ, and of what he sought to convey to the human race.

As we review the course of history and think of all the enormous crimes which have been committed, is it not plain that you are no longer responsible for anything you do? This release does not lessen your spiritual inheritance but increases it. You no longer work against yourself but for God.

CHAPTER XVI

THE FUTURE WITHOUT SUFFERING

Associated with this deep sense of guilt, which, as I have shown, has been the outgrowth of man's first necessity intensified by the opportunity thus created for his rulers, is the underlying conviction that we must always pay the price. Indeed this phrase, as a permanent addition to our group thought, has become firmly embedded in the human consciousness.

Yet nothing is more certain than that this is false.

If we consider God as the giver of all things, and at the same time consider our own unworthiness (this for the moment), we must see that we are enormously in God's debt. If, taking our lives as a whole, God gives us so much more than we deserve, is it not plain that it is possible for him to give us everything in return for the nothing which we give him?

And this—in the sense I am now writing—is the broad fact. Our gratitude is thus restricted by the sense limitations of our thought.

We must therefore rid ourselves as soon as possible of the notion that it is necessary for us to suffer. We do so now only by common consent. The universe is

ours to enjoy to its very full as much as we develop the capacity to enjoy it, and this without paying anything. When we know, or believe otherwise, it is because our unreal or mortal self stands in our own spiritual light.

In short, there is no real need for us to suffer any.

"Do you mean to say," I think I hear you exclaim, "that it is possible to go through this world without any suffering?"

I not only think it is possible (although not at present), but I believe that the ascending spiritual sense of mankind will in time solve this problem. We must remember that, while great advances have been made in spiritual insight, we are now only on the threshold of still greater ones. For one thing, when once we come to understand the valuelessness of those things which we have hitherto termed sin, and coupled with this the unreality of so much that now seems so dear to us, we shall enter into an entirely new world.

Suffering is a blanket term to express all those seemingly deterrent conditions from which, with the cowardice of ignorance, we shrink. Little by little, as we advance along the corridor of the soul's progress, it unlocks the successive doors of understanding. Suffering is the lower end of the vibratory chromatic scale, the other end of which is Union with God. This

Union has its roots in transitory pains. We must indeed suffer and be chastened in our awakening, but this melts into infinite peace. While, as I have stated, it is true that consciousness depends upon contrast, it is not essential from the new birth onward, that this contrast lie between suffering and peace. The enlarging spiritual vision unfolds ever widening multitudes of God-given thoughts. Angels beckon us onward. Love rules here. We absorb suffering in order to fertilize the flowers of immortality.

Communication between souls already shared by the few will undoubtedly be established, or rather the truth about it will be released, for the benefit of all mankind.

All those things which we have hitherto considered as temptations will drop away from us; their utter foolishness will be made so plain to our awakened spiritual sense that they will form no attraction for us. Thus the idea of sinlessness, which we first came to hold, will, indeed must, inevitably be followed by the externalized sinlessness.

This conception of the future of mankind is no idle dream, but it has actually been demonstrated already in the lives of thousands of people.

The strange part of it all is that this condition requires no effort, but only the entire absence of effort. We do nothing. We leave all to God.

CHAPTER XVII

PROPOSITIONS

You must think out every proposition for yourself as it comes up.

Here is the first proposition.

THE REASON WHY WE HAVE ANY TROUBLE IN SUPPORTING OURSELVES HAPPILY IS BECAUSE OF WEAKNESS DEVELOPED THROUGH A HIDDEN SENSE OF DEPENDENCE UPON SOME MATERIAL THING.

It would be possible for me here to give a list of individual cases, with names, dates, assets, etc., and I know from long observation that this list could be indefinitely extended.

But this is unnecessary and unfair, as it would involve persons still living.

Also, another danger presents itself which I mention slightly in order to dispose of it.

We have no right to judge others. Besides, we never have enough evidence to be able to judge them properly. What seems to us reprehensible and often unintelligent in others may not be so at all, and a little time may prove that it is not so.

But the evidence is not of that nature. It consists of a certain statement, which can be verified only by the understanding which follows internal examination. "Know Thyself," is the only rule to follow.

For instance, we find that a large proportion of boys who do not succeed so well either in business or in the professions as their fathers have done, or who even fail, do so because they have depended too much upon their parents. There are exceptions. Some boys have the genius to see that the material machinery with which they are surrounded is of no consequence; they discard it rapidly. Then again, there are boys who have gifts; it may be for drawing, or music, or writing, and these boys are likely to scorn all attempts to tame them to luxury. In order to secure their own soul independence, they break away and go through extraordinary hardships. But broadly speaking, our failure to take care of ourselves is always due to the presence of this secret weakness. We have formed the unconscious habit of leaning on certain material things, and this rises up like a mist before our spiritual sight and prevents us from seeing the truth.

IT IS UPON THE UNKNOWN AND NOT THE KNOWN THAT WE MUST ALWAYS DEPEND FOR SUPPORT.

This statement, as a practical proposition, seems

to be almost foolish, until we come to examine it. Yet the known is really the unknown, and the unknown the known.

For instance, there is no possible way that we can account for talent. Many attempts have been made, and they have failed. We may study all we please and perfect ourselves in any trade or occupation, but it is our talent that carries us through, and that is the one thing which is properly called a "gift," for we ourselves do not know how it works.

What we have in the beginning we always have. We do not actually improve any. All so-called training BRINGS OUT our talents. If a man gets better and better, it is only because, through increased understanding, he is able to RELEASE the unknown forces that flow through him. "Genius," rightly declares James Allen, "is always impersonal."

There is no accounting for these things, and our whole trouble consists in trying to account for them. It is precisely this which stands in our way. From a religious point of view it is called faith, but no point of view is exclusive for itself, but is only good in so far as it expresses universal truth.

We actually never know what universal truth is. We are living in a world where everything must be explained in a certain way, and in which there is no

other way, however much we may delude ourselves into believing that there is.

The whole history of religion and philosophy is strewn with attempts to explain the unknowable. And the imagination of man from time immemorial has built up structure after structure—philosophical castles in the air—in order to account for the universe. We have had angels and systems; we have had planes of thought, and calculations built on mythical numbers, such as seven and nine.

I am not dismissing all these attempts. The fact is that each one of them, conceived through some human experience and attended often with much suffering, is more true than anything we see in the visible world. God is always as real as each one of us chooses to make him, and the fact that one man's God differs from another's does not make either any the less real. When we attempt to know anything, this effort on our part defeats the very purpose we have in mind. It is impossible for us to know anything except the unknown. This is the only truth that is stable, that is unalterable. No matter what philosopher or fanatic or mystic attempts to argue with me, my answer is always the same.

I DO NOT KNOW; THEREFORE I POSSESS ALL THE KNOWLEDGE THERE IS.

This idea has often been stated before, perhaps

best of all in the beginning by Lao Tse. But it has always been dimly perceived by every true searcher, and is a part of every religion. Beneath the surface vocabulary of the Bible, it is everywhere present. You cannot look upon the face of God. Christ emphasized it over and over. When he stated that he had overcome the world, he was merely announcing this thought. The word "overcome," as he used it (Greek "nikao"), means to gain the victory over; that is to say, the world is a world of material knowledge. When we gain the victory over it we discard it; we understand its nothingness. We cannot gain a victory over anything permanent. It should never be deemed a sacrifice to cast out the things of this world. The unconscious sacrifice we make is in not seeing the necessity for so doing.

The difference between science and religion can thus be focused down to a very simple thing. Science insists that inasmuch as the "world" (and by world I mean the whole process of education, sensation, everything which goes to make up our sense-consciousness of things in general) is all we have to go by, it is really immoral, not right, for us to say that we can penetrate beyond this world and declare that we know things which by no possibility can we know, according to the only standards of knowledge we have; namely, the world-vocabulary of sensation.

And all this is quite right.

As soon as we come, quite heroically, to face this matter, however, the first thing that we must perceive is that this problem is concerned with ourselves alone. Nobody else can possibly help us. No books can enlighten us. We must arrive at the solution by ourselves, and it is precisely this great fact which we refuse to admit, and this refusal, this reluctance, is what causes the chief trouble with our support, strange as this may seem. For certainly the connection does seem very remote between paying our cash for car-fare and food each day, and the apparently silly proposition that all this depends on our understanding that all we can know is the unknown. Yet this is THE ONLY THING WHICH IS ALWAYS TRUE. Everything else here on earth fails us but that.

By beginning at once, in the light of this dawning understanding, to cast off all reliance on the known—and this means every material thing, and every personality—and depending entirely upon the Unknown, always admitting that it is always unknown—we then begin to see all our problems solved.

And this is one of the most marvelous awakenings that can happen to any human being. It is so incredibly marvelous that it can be defined in no human terms. *It has to be lived in spiritual consciousness to be understood.*

What is one engaged in doing all the time? In pushing out the known, that is, the world, and in substituting for it the Unknown. And how does this work? It works in the following manner.

We immediately become a trustee, a kind of reservoir or conduit, for all the soul-power in the universe. That does not mean that we have not been so before, because it would be quite impossible for any one to be so thoroughly blind that some of the truth did not work through him. It only means now that we grow larger and larger, as we come to see the full sweep of this infinite possibility. Instead of being limited, we are unlimited. There is therefore nothing which we cannot do, because we do not do it ourselves.

The effort of doing things ourselves is what causes us to do them so imperfectly and incompletely. Furthermore, when we come to understand this law, we see it illustrated everywhere. The reason why the seemingly idle people have so much power, are so much more successful, is because, even in a very small measure, they let things go, let things work themselves out.

That is the whole secret, to let things work themselves out.

It is very difficult. The majority of people in the world have never learned it. The few people who do the greatest work have never apparently acquired it.

It is like a spiritual gift. They have understood it unconsciously.

And when ordinary men are thrust into great positions—as the world goes—this thing then often works through them. It may be said of them that under pressure they rise to their responsibilities. What really happens is that, coming to a sudden sense of their own utter inadequacy, they give up; they see they can do nothing in themselves, and so go along and do the best they can. This attitude is often preceded by great moments of despair. The hopelessness of the whole situation strikes them with such force that there is nothing else to do but to "trust to luck."

Thus, quite unconsciously, men who have done some of the greatest work in the world have been driven by the Unknown into it. In the face of all the evidence, we cannot generate anything by ourselves. We have to be fed even every few hours. Therefore if it is true that the gift we have, whatever it may be, has supported us, even in a small way, is it not certain that the extension of this idea to include the whole man will release the Unknown so that we come in time to overcome the world?

CHAPTER XVIII

IDEAS

A MAN who went to war, fought without in the slightest degree considering his own life, and came back a hero, then promptly deserted his wife and children, not only refusing to support them, but simply left them all suddenly in the lurch.

Years passed. The deserted wife pulled herself together. Her children grew up. They struggled against the known; that is to say, in the emergency thus created, they simply had to depend upon themselves, and wherever this happens the Unknown begins to work within us. So in time they grew up to be reliant and to find themselves, without their father. They are all successful. Not that every father should desert his family in order to make them a success!

It does mean, however, that the more he leads them to depend upon themselves, the more successful they will eventually become.

The common error works both ways.

When a father gives his family more than they

should have, he is surrendering to his own weakness as well as theirs. It is, as we say, quite "human" to do all this. We would be inhuman if we did not do it, at least to some extent.

It may be right to do it to some extent, especially when a correct understanding is arrived at as to the real value of the things that the father gives.

We are living now in a society where an utterly false value is placed on the things of this world. Until we understand that the best things are not bought with money, we shall suffer the inevitable consequences of our own ignorance.

We are not guilty. We are ignorant.

A man I know worked all his life at a comfortable salary, indeed a large salary, as the head of a financial department in a large fiduciary institution. He sent his boys to college. The expense of bringing up his family took all of his income. He arrived at middle age. Within one year his wife died, he lost his position and was unable to get another, his boys dismissed him with a certain veiled contempt (outwardly polite), and his health gave out. He was driven to the verge of suicide.

He was conventionally intelligent. Had read much. And the very first thing he said to me was:

"I know all about it. I have only myself to blame. I am guilty, and there is nothing left for me

in life but to take my medicine." He believed that thoroughly. He was a one-dime man.

There are thousands like him. He had traveled with the known all his life, had banked upon it; it had carried him well through up to a certain point and then, quite swiftly, had thrown him down. He saw what had happened but did not perceive that his erroneous idea of his own guilt was only making his fate more certain.

He may have been like the man in Christ's parable who had simply buried his talent in a financial institution and had not tried to make it earn anything else but the satisfaction of daily needs. When the time came for an accounting, he had nothing else to show.

And he knew it. He would have been the first one to admit the full force of the parable. He told me so practically himself. What did he fear? Public opinion for one thing. His inferiority complex suddenly asserted itself. He was brave enough. He did not even want to talk to me, feeling sensitive to his own conscience, feeling that it was up to him to suffer.

If this man, in company with thousands of others who yearly go down to material ruin, could early in life have understood the truth, what joy throughout life would have been his?

And that is precisely what we shall come to. Our whole educational system will in time be altered in

conformity with this everlasting Truth. It must be so, because Truth is certain to prevail. The course of history already shows that.

We should remember that we are unlimited in our capacity to release the welcome we can give to the infinite source of supply. And to do this it is a great error to assume that we must work too hard.

What is work? Have you ever stopped to ask yourself that fundamental question?

What we actually mean by work is the drudgery we are forced to perform in order to accomplish what we are after; that is to say, in order to support ourselves. There are countless people—the majority—dedicated to this drudgery.

One man has a single idea. It comes to him out of the unknown. Thereafter thousands of drudges are employed to work for that idea. Do you not see that this idea is working for this man, while thousands work for this idea?

We say of the capitalist that his capital represents the labor of thousands of workmen. That is true enough. But each one of those workmen has, abstractly, the same chance that he has.

We cannot say that his education has given him a better opportunity, because the evidence shows us that most of the world's biggest ideas have come from the

humblest workers. An idea comes through everywhere and anywhere. I repeat it: genius is impersonal—genius is God breaking through.

Now if you will go on from this point with your internal examination of yourself, you will discover—quite possibly to your amazement—that it is the ideas you have, or have had, that are supporting you.

It is n't your actual work. It is always your ideas.

Let us suppose that the Truth, considered as a whole, is a great tree, and that this tree is constantly throwing off flying seeds. Let us say that these flying seeds are always floating about in the spiritual atmosphere, in anticipation of falling upon the right soil.

Now these seeds are ideas. They come from nowhere. If your soil is right, that is, if you have detached yourself from the known, then you are ready to receive them. And as you receive them, they grow of their own accord, and support you. They are elsewhere.

When a man has a trade or a profession, this means only that there has grown up in his mind a certain number of ideas. But, to bring in another parable, you can see quite plainly that if he does not keep the soil clear, these ideas are going to be overgrown with weeds.

You must keep your soil (your thought) clear.

To do this you must search yourself constantly.

Another thing. You may well say to yourself at this point:

WHY IS IT THAT IF I HAVE A TALENT, I CANNOT DO A CERTAIN THING AS WELL AS ANOTHER, OR BETTER?

Suppose you are an artist or a doctor.

Why is it that there are better artists, and better doctors, than you are?

There are two reasons, and one of them (not the lesser) is that, after all, this may not be true.

How do you know you are not? Who told you so? Public Opinion? *What has public opinion got to do with you?*

Are there not enough cases before your eyes of men and women who have worked blindly, in obscurity, unnoticed by the world, who afterward have been proved to be the greatest of their day and generation?

How do you know that you are not the greatest artist, or the greatest doctor, of this one?

If you are not, nobody may suspect it but you.

I have often had people come and tell me what I really was before I knew it myself.

There are no limitations to thought, except what we make ourselves. Yet that is not right, because it implies that a limitation is something we do make.

A limitation is merely a lack of perceiving the truth.

If you plant a seed in your vegetable garden, you do nothing else but keep the soil clear of weeds, and the thing grows up and supports you by just so much. You do nothing to the seed. You remove the limitations, that is all.

Remove your own limitations, and there is nothing which cannot be accomplished through you.

There is all the difference in the world between being the servant of an idea and having an idea for a servant.

Yet it cannot be said that an idea is really a servant; it is more in the nature of a companion or a helper. And it never goes back on you.

You can see now that your own thought is wrong with regard to all ideas. The moment we understand that we do not create ideas, but that they come to us out of the unknown, it then becomes immediately apparent that our whole work consists in keeping ourselves RIGHT.

We say of certain things that they handicap our efficiency.

The owners of a bank will not employ a man whose character is in question. If he passes his nights drinking and carousing, they avoid him. Not only

because he might be tempted to steal, but because they know he cannot work when he does these things.

And yet his efficiency is not in question at all. Smoking, drinking, and carousing do not hurt your efficiency. They do something far worse; they cloud your internal thought so that the ideas cannot enter. We know that, so far as what is termed work is concerned, a man may often do more work under the temporary influence of alcohol than without it. I know, and doubtless you do also, many men who declare that they can do better work when smoking than not. It is precisely such illusions as these that set us back.

In the sense that it may break the law, smoking and drinking and carousing may all be sins, depending upon how the law is construed in particular localities. But these things are not sins so far as an individual is concerned. They become sins for him when he understands the spiritual truth that we must not depend in our thought upon the known, and when he then gives his thought over to them.

The same is true of many other things which are more important. True of envy, hatred, malice, lust, suspicion, desires, gluttony, etc.

We carry out in our actions what we think.

We must first understand what they mean.

I have lived all my life on several ideas which came

to me in the beginning, and which have supported me materially ever since. Sometimes I have neglected them and have suffered proportionately. So it is with us all. We are happy in proportion as we understand what happiness is. We are miserable in proportion as we are unable to arrive at a correct understanding of the UNKNOWN.

Many people call the Unknown "God," and this is quite right for them.[1] It does n't matter much. We advance in our understanding; we must eventually come to see that we cannot define God in any other manner except as the Unknown. What works in our lives as a practical fact, what gives us money and real so-called actual material support, is not the known, but it comes through the interstices between one kind of known and another kind of known.

Ideas always come to us; we never go to them.

We place ourselves in a receptive, non-fearful condition, learning to overcome the world by understanding its illusion, its nothingness; and when we succeed even partly and faintly in doing this, then the ideas gather about us. We have raised the blinds, opened the shutters, and let in the sunlight.

As we free ourselves from our limitations, we share the Universe with the Unknown.

No one supposes that Henry Ford's idea was orig-

[1] See Introduction.

inated by Henry Ford. It came to him out of the Unknown. Was he one of the fortunates in thus being presented with an idea which turned over to him a billion dollars? We do not know. Henri Fabre, the great French naturalist, worked all of his life doing his immortal books, and this in abject poverty. So did many immortals. We have no means of judging the happiness or unhappiness of individuals like those immortals or in fact any others. We are now dealing, not with illusive personalities which can never be anything more, but with eternal principles.

CHAPTER XIX

THE GREAT DEMONSTRATION

All progress, no matter in what field of human consciousness, physical, mental, or spiritual, has been made through faith.

Faith is not acquired by evidence but by repose. It is a calm feeling of reliance upon God. Evidence of a particular nature never convinces, because, being a part of the whole, it can always be disproved by another part. Truth is never based on evidence, but on Understanding.

Every great achievement can be traced back to a belief. Alexander believed in himself. Hannibal believed in retribution. Cæsar believed in Rome. Paul believed in Christ. Napoleon believed in destiny. Lincoln believed in Union.

Looking back to-day into the intricate maze of history, nothing is more certain than that, without the leaven of Christianity, civilization would long since have worn itself out. Christ saves the world every hour.

Without the hope, and the concealed but ever re-

current certainty, of something more permanent than the fitful life of the senses, that is, without God, mankind would have perished from sheer despair and monotony. Amid the welter of wars, cruelty, and injustice without, and the chaos of treacheries and errors within, Christianity has slowly but surely made its way. The subject of fiery controversies, of meaningless drivel over trivialities, preyed upon by every fiendish device of internal dissension, it still remains an ever growing truth with an increasing number of human beings, that the mystical but none the less real figure of the living and ever present Christ embodies every hope of eternal life capable of being expressed by all human beings, irrespective of age, sex, color, or nationality.

There is no escape from trial. No human being, however clever or intelligent, has ever been able to fortify himself against those ills which flesh is heir to.

But as I have shown, we are increasingly happy in proportion to the extent of our initial suffering, just as we progress by means of our enemies and not our friends.

So universal is the dispensation of earthly sorrow that Fortitude, Courage, Resignation, and Endurance are universally held by mankind in greater esteem than all other virtues. Yet sorrow is always fleeting and must therefore eventually disappear.

Behind the changes and fluctuations of material appearances going on before our eyes, God, like the blue sky behind the clouds, is permanent, harmonious, infinite, all powerful.

If consciousness depends upon contrast then the act of being aware of anything at all depends entirely upon the sensation produced by a difference between two states of being. We are entirely unconscious of the air we breathe. It is only by being deprived of it in part, or by having it united with different substances, or by having it compressed and blown upon us, that we become aware of it.

Just as we breathe unconsciously and keep alive on the material plane, thus do we receive from God, the infinite Source of our being, a constant inflow of spiritual intelligence. In our limited sense of things, we think that what keeps us alive is the air we breathe and the water and food we absorb, and this of course is true from the physical point of view. In reality, however, these things would avail us nothing without the necessary inflow of spiritual intelligence which comes direct from the infinite resources of the universe. We are ordinarily quite unconscious of this fact, but we do get glimpses of it during sorrow or stress, when we suddenly lose our appetites and live on without any apparent means of material sustenance; also at such times when, during our higher

flights, we seem to be sustained by superhuman forces, and perform feats of endurance which afterward seem wholly amazing. We are constantly sustained by a higher power.

During our moments of greatest desolation God is closest to us. I repeat that all suffering is ephemeral, fleeting, shifting. We look back upon it and know this. Its reality is evanescent. It is a mist. Departing, it leaves no stain. Nothing can really separate us from the love of God.

But our present earthly conditions are temporary, false, external, based on no permanency, and to rise above them and tear ourselves loose from them is a painful process of detachment. These conditions cannot control or dominate us permanently. By every subtle means known they seem to do this, playing upon our own fears, masquerading in the form of every ingenious doubt. Thus Satan, chief citizen of the World, makes us believe we are guilty, and flatters our material intellect with those shameless devices employed in every age, but which our terrorized senses accept anew, as if they had never been before. But Satan always overplays the game. He hangs himself by his own rope. Eventually he bores us with his insistences. We are ready to be crucified if necessary but not to be bored. And suddenly, and with surprising ease, we repudiate and cast out the

whole poisonous mass, only to realize that it isn't a mass, that like the vain puffing of adders it has no reality, that it is merely our own false fright, a fell specter of a morbid imagination. The true sense of Joy which succeeds is permanent, never absent.

CHAPTER XX

FATHER AND SON

HOWEVER much skeptics may discredit the spiritual ascendancy of Christ, or dispute the virgin birth, it is certain that he was a historical character. It is equally certain that, if he be regarded as a mere revolutionary, he showed sublime courage. He voluntarily went to his death. There is a similarity between Socrates and Christ in this respect. Both refused any compromise. But in addition to this, Christ left behind him a collection of sayings which, aside from all fanaticism, are regarded by the most intelligent people in the world to-day, irrespective of race or creed, as masterpieces of profound truth, as truly divine.

Then again, the evidence is conclusive that Christ Jesus has had more influence over the most advanced and progressive members of the human race than any other man. He cannot be dismissed. He stands as the sole figure of that Ideal which all men vision in their moments of greatest suffering and trial.

To those of us who have come to believe in him and to follow him as best we may, the realization that

he did not shrink from suffering, that he accepted it as the human lot, and that he rose above it and thus overcame it, this consciousness is the great sustaining truth in our lives. It is this consciousness which we wish so earnestly and devoutly to impart to others.

And if proof is wanted of another life beyond the life of the senses, the answer is: try it and see. Thousands of men and women are ready to testify to it. That our minds are constantly overcast with materiality does not prevent us from knowing the truth. The material process indeed is constantly interwoven with the sense of reality. We are never secure. We are always secure.

One thing, however, which bothers us is this: if God, as it does seem, must of necessity leave us to our own devices, if this indeed is the only way in which we can gain power and tranquillity, how is it possible for us to win out in the end with such odds against us? Particularly is this true when our experience shows us that during those periods when we seem to have gained, there will come some surprising, wholly unlooked-for calamity (or even a series), which no human calculation could have foreseen, and sweep us off our feet. We are—as it appears—confronted by actual practical conditions and not vague theories. Where is God then?

Besides, we think during these desolate periods,

what is the use of God anyway, if the very rules of the game prevent him from helping us, on the ground that if he does help us he will be only weakening us by so much?

It all becomes startlingly plain if we adopt a simple and ancient illustration and, on a small scale, put ourselves in place of God. If thus you become a father, you will see at once that your son's ability and power to maintain himself depend not upon what you give him, but upon what you withhold from him. It is true that you do give him equipment; that is, education, clothes, physical leisure for athletic development, and so on. But it does not require many years of experiment to make you see that all these things, as valuable as they are, are valuable only in proportion as your son himself, by his own real or spiritual intelligence, comes to use them and control them. Moreover it is quite easy to see that the excess of any of these things breeds in him weakness and not strength. He may thus become a prize-winning golf-player; and at first this seems an admirable thing. But if his golf-playing finally resolves itself into nothing more than the dreary repetition of tournament after tournament, of incessant cigarette-smoking, of pernicious publicity, of women and alcohol, in short, idleness and spiritual decay, why then it is evident that what you have done for him has been a vain thing.

Thus this whole problem resolves itself into a plain fact, that no matter how many opportunities you may give your boy, his ultimate failure or success will depend alone upon himself. It has been proved over and over again that out of the most distressing poverty and constant hardships a boy will grow to greatness, and that he may also grow to greatness in the midst of luxury.

Man, the true mystic, holds dominion over all things. Material or external conditions affect him only as his Real Self seemingly responds to them. A man may live in poverty and degradation all his life, an outcast, repudiated by every standard of contemporary society, and yet be great. Oscar Wilde is an instance. Lao Tse and Gautama went out into the wilderness. Socrates drank the hemlock. Christ suffered on the cross. The material body is temporal, inconsequential, and so recognized by the common agreement of mankind since the world began.

The wise father therefore leaves his son to God, displaying no pride in his son's material achievements, nor depression over his failures. He knows that he is unable to know about that son anything more than he may know about any one by merely looking through a narrow slit in a camera at a human figure in action. Love and truth are the only guides. The wise father knows that it is only through the constant correction of

his own internal consciousness, in the light of this ever expanding truth and Love, that he can ever have any influence over that son. And this is true of others.

Is it not now plain that God helps those alone who help themselves, and always in proportion as they learn, if slowly and haltingly, to help themselves? Is it not plain that this truth, proved and reproved by the experience of all the ages, has nothing to do with God's goodness?

And is it not plain that this suffering, of which we so constantly complain, which we so passionately resent, and the very stigma which we so constantly try to fasten upon God himself, is the only way to Peace?

Yet here we are at once faced with an enormous interrogation.

For if what I have written is true, if we have nobody upon whom to depend but ourselves, if any pleading, any reaching out and reliance upon that universal power which is all about us—or within us—is only a bid for certain decadence and tends to make us parasitic, then how does God come in at all? Neither success nor failure means anything. Nothing is certain. Nobody knows. Chance governs. God, the infinite, all powerful, is out of it. We are on our own, and our own is unknown.

The answer to this question lies back of the screen. The Pearl of Great Price is hidden within the myster-

ies of the human consciousness. In reality it is everywhere: it is before us and behind us, above us and below us, without and within us. But we are dulled by our own selfish motives; darkened is our vision to the blinding light of Truth; like owls at noon, we shake our heads wisely and cling to our swinging branch and blink at the unknown sun that floods the landscape.

The first and last thing for us to remember is that there is nobody else but God. We must practise at this, meditate upon it, subject it to every test, cling to it, never let it get away from us, and, amid every fleeting circumstance, get it so firmly fixed in our consciousness that it becomes a permanent certainty. After that we shall have no further trouble.

At first sight this seems an easy thing to do. It is very much like learning a verse out of the Bible—over in a few moments. Unfortunately the greatest intellects in the world have been tricked by just such reasoning. Nothing is more fatal in some conditions than to dismiss the obvious. Many clever writers know this, their whole object being to reassemble the obvious in such new and sensational forms that it will attract attention. In doing so, many of them are shameless, adulterating the truth with their own selfish purposes, commercializing it by artful embellishments; for it does seem to be a fact that a little truth, tricked out in this manner, is more widely popular

than in its pure state, just as flashy jewelry, containing a few grains of precious metal, is eagerly bought in cheap forms by thousands. Real jewelry, real pearls, real diamonds, are expensive. God is not gained by rote. He is not sent by mail on the instalment plan, nor does he lie on every bargain-counter.

It must be admitted that hitherto the difficulty of finding him and keeping him has too often been insurmountable. The lives of the Saints and Mystics and the whole course of history have all revealed the same universal problem.

Yet God is ever present, and by sticking to the simple idea of Father and Son, the whole difficulty is removed. Father and Son are mystical terms. They constitute the main element running through the Gospel of John, which is perhaps the greatest religious utterance ever set forth by Man. Within the mystic circle of Father and Son lie all the elements of the universe, for nothing can be comprehended outside of the consciousness, within which the universe forms itself —sun, moon, and stars, all forms of matter and sensation. The relationship between Father and Son is severely practical; it is easily understood, it enters into all the minutes of our daily lives, it is unsentimental, offhand, exact but devotional, permanent and loving in the right way. And the rule is simple and immediate; namely, that this relationship constitutes

itself an unfailing guide. You have only to ask yourself at any given moment of doubt: "What would I do if I were my own father?" Or, "If God is actually my father, what would I do?" In either case, the answer is overwhelmingly clear.

No father expects his son to sit around and sing hymns to him, to flatter him with slavish praise, to be continuously and offensively grateful. All that is understood. No son—if he be the right kind of a son—expects his father to be putting his hand into his pocket and continuously helping him out of scrapes. If, in a simple natural manner, you will just understand how you yourself would treat your own son, you will then come to see exactly how God treats you. And if you want to know how to act toward God, why, just act toward him as any son would act toward his father. As a father, you don't take your boy aside and pump him full of superfluous advice; if he makes a mistake or displays vicious tendencies, you don't kick him out of the house. You are sorry for him then, you may grieve vastly about him, but at least you stand by him. You do not judge him.

As a son, you know very well that, upon previous occasions when your father has seemed to be silent, or has seemed to withhold things from you, he was standing by you in the best possible way, *by letting you work the thing out for yourself,* so that you could

really learn something the next time, and that he never deserted you. And this gives you confidence to believe that even if the case seems hopeless he is always back of you. A friend once said, after a great disaster that had come to him:

"It did not seem probable to me that God would have saved me before upon so many occasions, and this always in the nick of time, just to let me go now."

The first step is therefore quite simple and through everything should be strictly adhered to. Dismiss all the confused murmurs and disputations of a very noisy world, and hold steadfastly to the simple thought that God is your Father, not in name but in actual fact and practice. The next step is to be guided by the ordinary rules of conduct between father and son, as you understand them in your daily life. When you want to know how to act, or what to do, just do what you would do to the kind of a father you would be if you had a son like yourself.

One of the difficulties we encounter—and this will be very persistent—is our inability to realize the constant presence of God. If we are always on our own and must depend upon our wits to extricate ourselves from the scrapes we get into, where does God come in? I repeat this question for emphasis.

As we go through life we have a great longing for permanent companionship. We are lonesome. Even

the best of friends are not reliable and have a way of dying off just when we need them most. Material diversions pall. And work, that universal panacea, has its limitations; it offers small response in love. So we wonder constantly why it is that God the Unknown, who so often withholds his benefits for our own sakes, is not more friendly. Would it do any harm for him to make us feel that he is really with us? If we could actually talk with him! Would it not indeed be wonderful if, on some quiet afternoon, we could sit alone with God, both looking out together at the common scene, being content to be silent, not asking anything of each other—just friends?

Yet strange, almost weird as it seems, that is precisely what God always is. The secret lies in the cultivated and devotional simplicity of one's outlook on life. God never varies. Our own clouded material sense of things prevents our seeing him as he is.

God does help us. We grow and develop, not, as we may suppose, by a series of disasters, but only by a series of tests, or just the right measure of discipline —estimated to the weight of a hair—which will enlarge our understanding, make us truly sons of God.

God himself, the Great Father, is back of us. He never permits us more than we can bear. Reflect, and you will see that this is truly so. Nothing can really separate us from the love of God.

Yet this feeling which I have indicated hitherto in a most general way, namely, our sense of inadequacy, is a quite definite thing, whether we regard it from the material, intellectual, or spiritual standpoint. It is well expressed by the cry of Hamlet:

> The time is out of joint:
> O cursed spite, that ever I was born to set it right.

Pathologically it is expressed by psychoanalysts under the term of "inferiority complex." The one thing a doctor has to do, when confronted by a case of this sort, is to restore the patient's confidence in himself. Spiritually it is indicated perfectly by the attitude of the prodigal son in his great cry of despair, "Father, I am no more worthy to be called thy son." And the cure lies in the reply of the father, "All that I have is thine." (Remember, Christ tells us this.)

During our moments of greatest despair—whether we be spiritually or just materially inclined, it makes no difference—our one stumbling-block lies in our lack of faith. If spiritually, it is not so much lack of faith in God as in our own sense of sin, our utter inability to meet the requirements of God. If materially, it lies in this same sense of inferiority, our complete incapacity to pull ourselves together, to have our confidence restored.

Now the Truth is that in either case we have really

nothing to say about it. We are bound by a higher law.

Looking at the matter from the material or intellectual point of view, it is a fact that what we actually accomplish is accomplished in some mysterious manner, the cause of which we never can seem to know. For example, there have been numerous cases, running back into distant times, of mathematical prodigies who in a moment give the answer to some intricate mathematical problem without any apparent thought.

Thus a boy prodigy under twelve, when asked how many minutes have intervened since the stated date of Cleopatra's birth, will outwardly go on conversing, but in a matter of sixty seconds or so will suddenly and without effort give the correct answer. In almost any attitude we assume, our passivity determines the result. We appear to do nothing in ourselves. Indeed, if we make any effort, this only acts as an obstacle to the correct answer.

Now spiritually the same thing is true, and throughout the life of Christ it was emphasized in many different ways. Jesus insists that we shall take no anxious thought. He insists that no good is in himself but only in the Father. He tells us in many ways to seek first the kingdom of heaven, and "all these things will be added unto you."

The prodigal son had exactly the same experience. Logically there was absolutely no excuse for him. He had been given every opportunity and had deliberately thrown every opportunity away. He was a complete sinner. He had wasted his substance, had reaped the inevitable consequences, had fallen as low as any sinner can fall. Also his brother's attitude—from the standpoint of the world—was strictly logical.

Yet what happened?

His father, without the slightest hesitation, ignored entirely everything his son had done and simply said, "My son who was lost is found again."

And he did not stop at this. He killed the fatted calf, and, still ignoring all worldly standards, announced, "All that I have is thine."

This great allegory and practical lesson ought to be studied and understood by all of us.

It really means that we are never guilty of anything, so long as we face about and come home. Regarded from any point of view, is it not plain that if man thinks of himself as a hopeless sinner, as irredeemably inferior, he is only going to insure failure? In the material world confidence, and in the spiritual world faith, mean everything.

Of course we must face about. We must come home.

This is precisely where the idea of Christ is so nec-

essary. It is the idea of forgiveness. Jesus himself, in his life and ministry, freely forgave as big sinners as we may be. He said to the woman taken in adultery, "Go and sin no more." He did not condemn her. He forgave Peter freely for his cowardice, after predicting it in advance.

We must see therefore that no matter how low in the scale we may seem to be, it does not matter at all, so long as we come home.

Our action lies in our thought.

Logically and intellectually speaking, we are sinners. That is to say, we are conceived in mortality, and mortality is notoriously fleeting. We are corrupt, but what of it?

A careful and sincere study of the life and sayings of Christ must make it plain to us that there are really no restrictions on anything we do, that we are nothing in ourselves (that is, in our mortal bodies), and that we have only to "come home" to have God express himself for us, just as the father of the prodigal son did.

Possibly one of the reasons you have heretofore had difficulties with God is because, before this, the moment you have been with him—say, in one of your freer moments—you have asked him for something.

How do you know but that he would like to sit with you some day and just be let alone? How do you

know, just by letting him alone, if you are not really opening your windows to the universe, to God himself? Think of what God must be going through all the time with interminably self-centered people nagging him into giving them something?

Possibly then you will come to see that he is a God of Love, infinite, all-powerful, intimate, everlasting.

The attitude of most of us toward God is undoubtedly that of ignorant selfishness. The mere fact that we may believe him all-powerful seems to give us the privilege of obtruding ourselves upon him at any hour of the day and night, of pestering and nagging him with our troubles, which we stupidly assume are the only ones in the world. Too many people in this world seek only to be comfortable.

A moment's reflection must convince us that the mere wiping out of whatever troubles we may have on hand, and this instantly, on the part of an all-powerful God, would leave us where it found us, without hope of progress, mere nonentities. But aside from all this, it is certainly the worst kind of manners toward God, and reveals the lowest kind of intelligence and ingratitude and bad sportsmanship, to treat him as if he were merely a sort of hired man, whose sole business it is to relieve us from anxiety, and carry out our every silly and nonsensical whim.

If we recognize that God has placed his divine mark

upon us, that we are truly his sons and daughters, real citizens of the City of Perfection, and one with him in so far as we carry out his Divinity, then we place ourselves at once on the permanent plane of divine union with him, we live down our own mistakes like real men and women and not cringing sinners. We come to see what the real love of God is; that it is not a fluctuating, carnal thing to be bargained for; that it is not emotional or weepy, but a universal principle of rightness, in which all men and women are brothers and sisters in a companionship of complete and harmonious understanding, and in which God, who is himself Love, is always present.

This truly and actually is the Kingdom of Heaven that dwells within us. The recognition that we ourselves, as divine intelligences, have our own responsible part in it, is itself our immediate possession. It is our Pearl of Great Price. We are truly partners with God; we are citizens of the Great City. And what worldly occupation, no matter how important it may seem, can compare with this one? It fills our lives, keeps us occupied with realities and not with ever changing trivialities. It protects us.

We do not have to be good. We bury our mistakes, counting them as such. The one thing which can possibly lead us to failure is to regard ourselves as incorrigible sinners. We do not expect to conquer the

world in a day. God has all the time there is, and when we stumble we can get up again. We understand God at last, that he is not something to be worshiped, kowtowed to and wheedled, but the only Real Person in the universe, to be worked with, to be helped, to be regarded as a Father and let alone, while we do our own job for him. We have got to give him the credit for knowing something—for knowing everything.

As soon as we get this idea in its fullness and completeness the old world drops away from us, and at once we enter into a new one, the City of Perfection, the Zion of our hopes, the eternal city set on the hill of divine vision.

It is almost impossible to over-estimate the privileges of this citizenship. All of them are immediate.

In a very incomplete and material but practical way, we get glimpses of this truth in the career of St. Paul, who upon so many occasions was saved by the announcement that he was a Roman citizen.

Material power bowed before this material announcement. How much more does material power bow before the spiritual announcement that one is a citizen of the City of Perfection?

After some period of suffering when we suddenly resolve to claim our citizenship in this eternal Zion,

we may wonder, in our childish innocence, what our occupation is going to be. Even then, it may not seem possible to us that the things which have hitherto interested us—our money-getting, our beautiful knick-knacks, our pride of achievement, our loves and our friendships—can possible be replaced by anything substantial enough to fill our lives with the increasing (and not diminishing) sense of satisfaction which comes with the consciousness of a genuine growth.

What are we to talk about? How are we now to think of all those things which before interested us so completely, but which now—in the light of God's real presence—we see only as shadows—specters of a vanishing environment?

As citizens of this new Zion we concede that we have privileges hitherto unrecognized. But we see ourselves now, not as the owners of a mere badge of protection from personal discomforts and attacks, but as the privileged partners in a great company, and therefore we must look beyond ourselves, casting in our lot with the God of all things for his purposes. Yet with this deeper understanding comes the very practical natural thought that it is right for us to use our citizenship when necessary, just as, for example, Paul used his.

How far then are we the arbiters of our own des-

tiny? What are we to be thinking about in our quiet moments, and how are we to act when some sort of action seems to be necessary?

The reply is immediate and conclusive.

Take no anxious thought for the morrow. Be not troubled in your mind. When the moment comes, you will be told what to do. At any time you may be tested to the limit of your endurance, but you will never have more than you can bear. I repeat this for emphasis. The citizenship conferred upon you makes it necessary that, at any given moment, you should always do that which is necessary in the best interests of all. This may not seem so to you, but it always is so.

Be natural. Be unafraid. All things are determined for you, not by you. Dwell with God, asking him for nothing, and all things shall be yours. Accept suffering as a process of education. In your worst moments recall that everything passes. Your protection, no matter what emergency arises or what error assails you, is not a distant thing, but an ever present reality. It consists in your citizenship in the City of Perfection—beautiful Zion set on the eternal hill.

But ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels.

HEBREWS 12: 22.

CHAPTER XXI

THE APPROACH TO THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

The entrance into the life of the spirit takes place at the moment of realization that world-knowledge is weakness and material life is a dream, that all which hitherto has been deemed real is unreal. Christ touches us.

The sleeper awakens but slowly. At first his bewilderment, his anguish, his utter sense of negation, are in themselves blinding, until at last, through a period of probation, he comes to see that this very certainty that there is a life of the spirit depends entirely upon his inability to define it. Indeed it is something which is equally felt by everybody, and is quite beyond all fixing. How amusing it is to view so many materialists and intellectuals who, intoxicated by their vocabularies, under the degenerative influence of a false scholarship, actually assume that there is no reality to the life of the spirit, simply because it cannot be card-indexed! These people, however, are only misguided outwardly. Although they appear not to be conscious of any reality, they really

are. This truth becomes plain when occasionally they lower their masks and acknowledge the spirit. Scholarship is a kind of unrequited prayer. It is always hoping that the source of life will be discovered and is always being disappointed. But the true scholar, like the true mystic, never despairs.

All human systems break down like sand forts before the recurring crests of Truth. The fact that nothing is determined determines everything.

To those who, weighed with anxiety, restless and dissatisfied and agonized by the vain struggle to beat the game, and who, within the hidden recesses of their souls, feel this urge, what is to be said? Let us make our preliminary survey in terms as brief and plain as possible.

It is precisely the truth that the only thing certain in life is its uncertainty, which, forcing itself into our consciousness, leads to faith in God. And this faith can only be developed through a growing awareness that we never know God. The impossibility of finding God completely gives us the necessary impetus to create the God within us; and when—often like a blinding light—the instantaneous understanding of God's actual presence, of our own dominion, sweeps over us, this is the most glorious moment which comes to the human consciousness.

My position here is impregnable, embedded in

Truth, and points the way to the Kingdom of God, which, to those who have spiritualized their thought, is an ever present reality.

Yet startling as this may seem, in this material world, our peace, tranquillity, and sense of security depend upon our never coming to any conclusion. To be definite is to occupy a fixed point of ignorance. If it were possible to arrive at any conclusion about anything, in that respect consciousness would cease. Consciousness is possible only in a succession. If God were known, he would, at this very moment of understanding, vanish.

The very conditions of our being conscious at all depend upon our always going forward and never arriving. Even our destination is unknown to us. Yet to those who have spiritualized their thought, this destination is here. Now it is an ever present reality.

The true understanding of God depends absolutely upon our never knowing him. It is precisely this which sustains us, which gives us the only true faith. And it is by this faith that we overcome the world. There is no difficulty about this apparent inconsistency, to those who are able to discriminate between the material and the spiritual senses. That there is such a difference, that it is quite clear, that we may in a single brief moment lift ourselves from a sense of material conditions into a sense of reality, there

is not the slightest doubt. And when we are in the presence of this reality, we do understand God, enter into intimate relation with him. Not only is this true, but there is no detail so small, no concept so trivial, that we cannot submit it to God the Father and be certain that it has not been in vain. The skeptical reader must therefore suspend his judgment on this point for the present, being content to wait for further enlightenment.

What we term material knowledge is a mask which covers the face of ignorance. We proceed along life's journey by an interminable series of discards. There are twenty-six letters to the alphabet and twice as many cards in a pack. We keep on shuffling, but it is the same old pack. Knowledge, so called, is only a new combination of ancient material.

What is the first thing necessary? To obey the rule of Christ and to give up all your possessions. These possessions are not material, not to be considered as so much cash or real estate or goods and chattels. If this were so, it would be easy. If a man has a hundred thousand dollars and a cancer, he will willingly part with his money to be cured, if the result can be assured in advance.

If we could purchase eternal salvation with what money we have, we would jump at the chance. In this short life, think of the many who struggle, the

sacrifices they make, merely to insure themselves a certain amount of comfort for a few last years. And consider all the countless victims who have been fascinated by this super-attractive bargain; namely, that if you give up your material possessions, nay even your body, you will be paid permanently. Think of the long lives of Mohammedans, who have gone joyfully to death, allured by the prospect of being toyed with indefinitely by a select company of transcendentally beautiful houris! And all this, mind you, on the mere word of a priest. Think of the countless religious who, in each succeeding generation, have taken on the vows of poverty! Of the martyrs, the mystics who in addition to material relinquishments have given their bodies freely to the sword and slayer.

If we may judge at all from the evidence presented, and by the light of our own deepest insight, it has been only a very small proportion of this long line of seekers who have come to understand that God, the illimitable and therefore the unknown, requires much more than this. Under the mob emotions of war, men give up their lives and their possessions freely. If these men who volunteer for this sacrifice are spared and return unhurt, the evidence shows that they may become criminals, abandoning their families and friends and sometimes destroying themselves. Thus we see that, given a strong enough emotion—

either that of religion or war—men and women, *without making any personal effort to find out the truth,* will sacrifice every earthly thing they have. If, therefore, we are actually to spiritualize our thought and realize the presence of God, we must go deeper than this.

God requires everything. That is to say, he requires the complete surrender of the whole consciousness. This is such an appalling ultimatum that no wonder so many turn from it in despair or outward derision. No wonder the majority try to forget themselves in the material pleasures of the moment; no wonder the rich court the vulgar splendors of society and travel; no wonder the priests and scholars produce interminable volumes to prove that God lurks behind every new system of philosophy or culture or so-called New Thought.

The victims always have the choice. They always decide for themselves. They have this right, and none should dispute it. These people do not want to give up. Bad as their situation may be, they prefer to stick it; they cannot make up their minds to detach themselves.

As for the representatives of human reason, their very material existence requires that they must convince their audience that they know something, indeed, that they know everything. It is only neces-

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sary, however, to point out that their complexity is their undoing, and to challenge them on their own ground. Ask them to explain themselves. They cannot do this because the data upon which they base their conclusions is changing under them constantly. Thus new editions of the encyclopedias have to be issued every few years, because the sum total of knowledge they represent has shifted. And certainly, an encyclopedia is a fair gage of human knowledge. When any man comes to you and declares that his system of thought is so intricate that he doubts very much whether you can rise to it, you may be certain that he is deceiving and lying to you.

And if we think the people I have just referred to are supremely credulous, ready to believe anything they read or hear about the future life, the scholars are just as bad, if not worse.

So far as his credulity is concerned, a highly educated man will believe anything he reads or hears just as readily as a child does a fairy story. He will not believe in a God, because the evidence is too sure, but he prefers to swallow the latest scientific bulletin, even though he knows that to-morrow morning will contradict it. He sneers at the virgin birth, and revels in bacteria he has never seen, even through a microscope, darkly. Then again all of us, to a greater or lesser degree, in accordance with our capac-

ity for taste and culture, fall into the unconscious habit of dramatizing our own material personalities. No woman of style ever shows a greater skill in parading her personality than does some popular philosopher or scientist; and as for the clergymen, God bless them, that is their chief stock in trade. A bishop of the Anglican Church will frequently contain enough dramatic material in his personality to furnish an entire theatrical stock-company. All these people frighten us by their front and their show of learning. We bow down to them like graven images. But ask them a question that is really simple and important, and they begin to shrink forthwith.

The whole system of organized society is a vast deception, a network of mendacity so intricate that an ordinary crystal maze is like a plank walk in comparison. Confront it, and it recedes in every direction. Ask the greatest authority in the world about any subject (as, for instance, electricity), and he will tell you he knows nothing, that he has been able to observe only certain results. The opinions, conclusions, data, sum total—call them what you will —upon any subject are constantly shifting, new facts are being added, old errors discarded. What is a fact now may be an error immediately afterward. Even the highest authority can state nothing positively. Thus, when we come to examine the evidence in any

field of human activity—science, theology, art, music, literature, or medicine—the answer is always the same: to-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow. If the source were known they could tell you. The material results of electricity are observed, but electricity itself is a complete mystery.

And those human personalities (who themselves are the assembled machines of education, convention, and tradition based on utilitarianism), that is to say, the Priests, Philosophers, Doctors, and Scientists and all other professionals, each with parts standardized in the particular school from which he has been graduated, those are the net-holders, men whose sacred duty it is to keep the Great Lie rolling like a Juggernaut over the slumbering souls of countless victims, who are predoomed to destruction even before these hidden souls have been aroused from their slumber.

These men are known by their fruits. Judged by their own standard, that of the world itself, they must be accounted failures. For if we admit that there is no God, that we are here just for a brief time only to vanish, then it is of the highest importance that during this brief period, and during all successive periods, we who hold the reins of the intellect shall at least do what we can to raise the material comfort of millions. Instead, scholars are almost uniformly selfish, thinking alone of their own concerns, taking

no thought for anything but some theory of life they pursue. They can be recognized by their manners. They are exclusive, sublimely complacent, impregnably superior, arrogant, cowardly, mercenary, and generally offensively polite. They claim everything and know nothing. Their bluster reaches the highest plane, however, when they robe themselves in the mantle of agnosticism. Thus one of them typically declares: "I am ready to believe in God if you can produce him. Until then you must pardon me if I dismiss him as unworthy of my notice."

Their very humility becomes the perfection of the grotesque. All scholars are by so much degenerate types of the spiritual man when their scholarship is only an intellectual process and not subordinate to the higher or mystic self. Thus some of the vilest characters in history have been the most learned.

These leaders and authorities I write of lay great stress on education, which is quite natural, for they are the Robots of the schools and therefore strictly loyal to their makers. Deprive them of their material training and there is nothing left of them. In literature they are as proud of their words as an undeveloped mother is of her brood, and display them in all combinations. They invariably denounce those who disagree with them as makers of platitudes. In all branches of thought—philosophy, medicine, art—

the layman is persona non grata. In the end, if they do not either consciously or unconsciously develop any spiritualization of thought, they wind themselves up, resolve themselves into negation. Occasionally they go mad as in the case of Nietzsche, and leave no echo behind. It is the spiritual alone that lives; all things else vanish. What now remains of Nietzsche is spiritual, although recognized as such only by those few who understood his real self.

And it is precisely this real self which lies underneath the mask of scholarship that counts. If it be asked, What then is the use of education, if it leads only to ignorance? my reply is that the value of an education lies strictly in the training it gives to character. For instance if a man passed say ten years in the study of history and languages, it cannot be said that at the end of that time his collection of material facts is conclusive or even accurate, because we know that in both history and philology the total collection of facts is constantly changing in accordance with new accretions.

CHAPTER XXII

THE SPIRITUALIZATION OF THOUGHT

THE world's greatest material favors are rightly bestowed on those who contribute joy. Multitudes will flock to hear a foolish song which gives starved hearts even the faintest aroma of real romance.

The power of joy is incalculable. HOW SINGULAR IT IS that so few understand that the spiritualization of thought leads to a joy which is far beyond anything the material senses understand. Joy, also, is something which can be cultivated. Half of the failures in medical practice are due to the taking away of one's hope for joy. It is the foolish things we do which recreate us. To be unattached and to be joyful is to overcome everything. We should not forget that we are here to have the best time we can. God places no limitations on true joy. Suffering is always due to a false sense of limitation. To learn to dance through life, mentally and spiritually, is to hold one's self immune to trouble.

The spiritualization of thought is the only thing which can save any one of us.

We do not know this until we are suddenly awakened to its absolute necessity.

Many never learn this but struggle on to the end, dying bravely. When difficulties arise in our lives, no matter what they are, they are always shared in common with the great majority. Disease and debt are the common lot. Occasionally an individual, sheltered by money, is saved from debt. But disease gets him in the end.

We all suffer from loss of friends, and from the death of those near to us.

We also suffer from the acts of those we love.

Spiritualization of thought, however, does not come to all of those who suffer. On the contrary.

If we may judge from observation, most people scoff at the spiritualization of thought. They cannot rise above the domain of the senses.

This includes the intellect. If a person is out of key, inharmonious, that is, in trouble of any sort, he is likely to be very obstinate.

Overcome by fear, he shrinks from going outside of his chosen field.

Besides, there is no valid argument for the spiritualization of thought, for those who do not believe in it. It is to them a mere patter. It means nothing.

I have known plenty of people in great trouble who,

desperately anxious to be relieved, would yet say, "I cannot reach up to what you mean; I see it, but I cannot do it."

Every one has a choice. Every one really knows.

The obstinacy of those who will not admit that there is a spiritualization of thought is only apparent. I know this, because I have seen many of these people suddenly awakened to what it means—after a long skepticism. Quite suddenly, and marvelously as it seems, they have come into the kingdom.

The skeptics, however, although they do not of course realize this, are the genuinely unintelligent ones. How can this be shown? Very easily, and in their own language.

A skeptic is in reality a critic. He does not say, "I do not know," but, "You do not know."

There is nobody so certain as a true skeptic. He dismisses your assurance with a gesture. You bore him. He has thus committed himself to a definite position. If, as a kind of sop to his own pride, he says, "I do not know," this is a definite position so far as he is concerned. He is condemning everybody else who thinks they do know. He therefore proclaims himself to be an absolute nonentity. Meanwhile he laughs at religion, and, curiously enough, comforts himself by the contemplation of the frightfully low-minded unintelligence of those who believe.

Back of his cynical attitude is the voice of one who says, "I know more than anybody."

The truth is that there is no form of intelligence so low as that intelligence which assumes a fixed position. If the critic had any real capacity for thought, he would instantly say to himself: "There is certainly no use my criticizing anything, because, while I am at this instant in a certain mental position, I may not be to-morrow. Therefore it would be evidence of gross unintelligence for me to assume that anything is so, when I cannot possibly tell whether my position may not be changed overnight."

Most of us, who have lived long enough to observe the human intelligence, have seen men time and again, who have violently asserted that such and such a thing was so, afterward have to take an opposite position.

Now the real meaning of spiritualization of thought is that we resolve at any given moment to be governed by our highest intelligence. Thus, at one stroke, we achieve absolute humility and put ourselves on the road to hold dominion over the world. Our position is constantly advancing. Those who have already achieved any spiritualization of thought will bear me out in this. The idea that a spiritual man or woman occupies a fixed position is ridiculous. What we are doing is making a constant readjustment to

God. Thus our very comprehension of God is constantly changing. How can it be otherwise? We are finite beings. We know that our senses are limited. We know very little. By keeping ourselves constantly free from earthly attachments—and by this I mean thought attachments as well as others—we are in a position to take in more and more; that is, we keep adjusting ourselves more perfectly all the time to spiritual rule, and thus achieve a constantly increasing harmony. I can recall quite well how terrorized I once was over difficulties which now affect me not at all. If it is said that increasing tranquillity is a concomitant of advancing age, I can only point to the evidence. It is not. True, because of a temperament, certain human beings appear to us to be constantly tranquil. But we cannot judge these cases any more than the others. We must not make comparisons which we cannot verify in our own thought. We have here a law of life which we must meet ourselves, face to face, and work out the understanding of it. It is this: the constant application of your highest intelligence makes for tranquillity and overcomes all difficulties, if it is carried to a finality. The critic, as I have indicated, has the lowest form of intelligence. He rests upon the false assumption that his own dicta cannot be changed, for otherwise he would not dare to utter any opinion.

I suppose there are those who by temperament are naturally religious, who enter into the things of God without effort. Yet it has never seemed to me that these people are spiritually real. I do not see how anybody can come to *understand* unless he has gone through a period of suffering and probation.

There are numerous instances of very young people who have taken the vows of poverty and entered into this spiritual life. I cannot tell about them. But generally speaking, the spiritual leaders of the world have been great sinners in the beginning.

I think it is necessary to be awakened to the need of Christ by suffering. You have to be so very desperate that you are willing to try anything. In this state of mind, you enter upon the straight and narrow path.

I have known a number of people who have suffered intensely, but have not seemed to be able to find the entrance.[1]

[1] The sense of living unity with Christ comes to us under strange conditions, and it came to me behind the steel bars and stone walls of the prison. For in prison I found not only greater opportunities for worthwhile social service, but a deeper understanding of religion. I found that when mankind walks in the sunlight of success, achievement, strength and power, we may dispense with God. But when its path lies where the darkness of struggle, heartache, prejudice, and social injustice falls; when the path men walk is wet with tears and blood; when if he stumbles and falls on the darkened way the gates of hell open and swallow him, he can only

This withholding is only what may be termed momentary. Augustine's mother worked and prayed over him for many years before he was converted. So that we never can tell much about others. We certainly cannot pester them with advice. We can give them as much silent help as possible. Spiritual enlightment, as much or as little as it may be, is a gift. It makes us in no way superior. On the contrary, it shows us our own unworthiness, and that everything we are comes from God. Also, we may be worse than others. Old habits cling. No comparisons of any kind can be made with justice.

What is the first thing that one does when he approaches the spiritual life? He prays. Awkwardly, no doubt, at first. And he probably prays to be relieved. He wants to have his difficulties removed. Or else he has some intense desire. Maybe, also, he has had a great grief. Some one he loves may have gone back on him. There are many calamities which can happen to us, any one of which might cause us to pray. We may have lost some one very dear, to whom we were passionately attached. What then?

travel that bitter path by clinging to the hem of His garment, as a bewildered child clings to its mother's skirts. When men have reached the extremity of weakness and helplessness there must be faith in something beyond puny human strength to which to cling, or we die, first in soul and then in body.

KATE RICHARDS O'HARE.

The first shock of this loss of some one, to whom quite possibly we have become attached through years of close association, is generally so overwhelming as to leave one completely stranded. The consciousness not only becomes overcast but completely black. Any kind of condolence seems utterly inadequate.

To one afflicted in this manner, it may seem singularly cruel, the refinement of heartlessness, to state that it is wrong to bestow either too much condolence or too much sympathy. Yet such is the case. It is one thing to understand and to enter into the sorrow of another, but it is quite a different thing to encourage that other to give way to it.

Nothing in the way of expediency or words can alleviate this kind of grief. Silent sympathy is much better. But in reality, there is only one thing for the grief-stricken one to do: endure. It generally requires every atom of courage to do this. But nobody else can take your place; nobody can make it any easier. The solemn realization of this fact in itself acts as a restorative. One must live on. One has a sacred duty to perform, as an example, to all others who, if they have not been at any time similarly afflicted, may be in the future. We must remember that our sorrow is the common lot. We must also remember that the one we seemingly have lost has not really been lost. We never can lose those real quali-

ties, traits, tendernesses, reciprocities, which, through the period of close companionship, we have already gained. This possession can never be taken away from us. The practical proof of immortality is often only seen by us after such a deep and abiding sorrow. We then come to understand that there is no death, that no one we love can ever really be taken away from us. How can we ever be separated from those who, with us, are citizens of the Eternal City? Such a thing is unthinkable.

And it may seem like a too tragic paradox that true joy should come after this. Yet it is so. Just as nothing can separate us from the love of God, so nothing can separate us from those who have passed on. Death mortally is always an incident.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE ADVANCE OF THE SOUL

AFTER we have made our approach to the spiritual life, we ask: Is there a method which we can employ in order to develop ourselves spiritually?

There is undoubtedly a method, that is, a way, but this way must be unknown. It can only be known to those who have arrived at the end of the journey, for all others who are on the way must of necessity be limited in their view to their own immediate vision.

Those who have been to public school, and will look back on their experience, know that as they went up through the grades they had not the slightest idea of the grades that were coming but only those that they had passed through. It was only when they had finished that they could look back and see the whole process.

There are seven stages to spiritual progress, each definite and understood when the student has passed through. But the majority are in the kindergarten stage, and this is true of the highly educated as much —if not more so—as with the uneducated.

The seven stages correspond very closely to the seven dispensations in the Bible, for, as a matter of fact, the Bible is merely a record of man's spiritual progress; that is, it is a history of the human consciousness.

As recorded in the Bible, the seven dispensations are Innocence, Conscience, Promise, Government, Law, Grace, and the Kingdom. Innocence corresponds to spiritual ignorance. That is, the mortal dream of life. Conscience is the awakening to the fact that man has a mortal body, subject to error, fleeting, criminal. The Promise is the sense of something more to life than mere animality, and with this a feeling that one has a creator who will "see one through." Government appears when man takes account of himself and forms some definite plan or resolve; that is, when his material ambition is awakened and he resolves to be successful. Law enters where he commits himself to a system. That is, he acquires a technique. He becomes a lawyer, a doctor, a critic, a business man, and surrounds himself with a definite set of rules for guidance. They become his gods. Grace begins where he suddenly, by conversion or some startling mental revolution, awakes to the Christ spirit, or to a sense of the fleeting. The Kingdom is where he comes to spiritual understanding. This process, in brief, is the way of the meta-

physical spiritual student. Some move through all stages rapidly. Others take many years. It is only, however, by arriving at the last stage (obedience, humility, detachment, liberty) that one can understand all the previous stages—which, while they are being lived through, are so often blindly lived through, in distress.

Here we are brought face to face with a problem about which there is undoubtedly much confusion. I will therefore briefly indicate it. Is it right for us to receive help from others, or must we go on alone?

Two ways are open. One is the way of obedience to authority. The other is the individual way in which we blunder along for ourselves.

The second way is my way, but it may not be your way. I shall dismiss the other, not in any critical spirit, as it is practised by millions of human beings and commands respect. Indeed, it may be the better way. For myself, I have tried it, and, either from temperament or otherwise, I am unable to follow it.

My way is the individual way, but what does this mean?

It means that I am constantly receiving help, and also direction, from others. Now this direction requires some explanation.[1]

[1] The way of help is indicated in the preface to "The Dark Night of the Soul" (St. John of the Cross) by Father Zimmerman: "It

When I am in trouble, another soul can help, even if that soul is not so far advanced along the way as I am. That soul can see for me a way out of my particular difficulty with clearer eyes than I myself. What that soul does for me is not to give me anything, not necessarily to make the way any smoother for me, but merely to define Truth for me in such a way that my understanding will become clearer. In short, that other soul is merely helping me to help myself. When this course is taken, we are on the right road. That soul, please understand, is not sympathizing with me, not doing anything for me but to enlighten me. This distinction should by all means be understood. And that is precisely what help, or right direction, means.

Now in this sense, and not at all in any sense of laying down a method of procedure, I can describe (but not define) a way which has been of enormous value to me. It is my way, always bearing in mind that my way is constantly changing, so that it might be said of it, that it is more of a direction than a method. It can be defined best of all by the word

stands to reason that a soul under such trials is abolutely dependent upon the guidance of a learned and experienced director. Otherwise the result might be fatal. In fact there is reason to think that some of the appalling falls from spiritual height to utter perversion should be attributed to the absence of proper direction during this most dangerous period." This is naturally the Roman view. I have referred to this in my chap. on SIN.

SEEKING. And in this seeking, I have gone over a certain area, or along a certain path, which, up to the point where I am now, may be of great service to those who, blinded by their own seeming misfortunes, are groping their way as best they can in darkness.

This way of mine can be best and most briefly described as the way of words. It is the study of special words, the meditation upon them. I have already hinted at this.

In the Indian mysticism is the great word OM. By study and meditation upon the word OM all things are arrived at.

In the Chinese mysticism, the ancient Taoism in its purity, the word Tao was the word used to meditate upon. In all ages of the development of the spiritual consciousness, it is through the study of particular words that the soul makes its progress.

St. Theresa devotes nearly a whole volume to the spiritual analysis of the Lord's Prayer. John of the Cross devotes a volume to the analysis of his poem, "The Dark Night of the Soul." Many other instances could be given. In particular, Swedenborg in the first volume of his "Arcana Cœlestia" (which consists of twelve volumes) takes up this entire volume of 585 pages with an analysis of the first ten chapters of Genesis. In this book and in the one succeeding, he lays down "line upon line, precept upon precept," and

in many instances writes whole pages about the spiritual significance of particular words. It would take many years of the closest application and continuous study and meditation to read these twelve volumes and understand the full meaning of what Swedenborg wrote. Those critics, therefore, who without close study presume to pass judgment, either upon Swedenborg or upon any other expounder of Truth, are guilty of the grossest kind of imposition upon their readers.

Many years ago, when I first discovered this way for myself, through the reading of Theresa's "Way of Perfection," and also through the reading of the Upanishads and "The Book of the King" by Lao Tse, I was so appalled by the immensity of the task before me that I was seized by a kind of despair. When Swedenborg, one of the world's greatest intellects, had passed years in the study of only ten chapters of Genesis, I saw no hope for myself. I looked up the statistics, and saw there were in the whole Bible 1189 chapters, 31,173 verses, and 3,566,480 words. Then I went back to the Sacred Books of the East, and in the KAHNDOGYA-UPANISHAD I read as follows:

10. Now therefore it would seem to follow, that both he who knows this [the true meaning of the syllable Om] and he who does not, perform the same sacrifice. But this is not so, for knowledge and ignorance are different. The sacri-

fice which a man performs with knowledge, faith, and the Upanishad is more powerful. This is the full account of the syllable Om.

It was not until several years after this initial experience, when I had spent so many of them in meditation, that the full significance of this WAY at last dawned upon me.

I saw that what we Christians term the Christ Spirit is universal, and that in various forms it has always been THE WAY OF TRUTH. The syllable OM is merely the symbol of universal Truth, just as Tao is in China, or what we call THE KINGDOM is in our own faith.

But much more than this, I also saw that it was not at all necessary for me to do what Swedenborg did, any more than it would be necessary for me, as a builder of a hut in the woods, to emulate the example of the architects who build sky-scrapers or any other grand work of architecture.

Once we have the key which opens the way to universal truth, we can find our own direction easily enough. The individual through prayer is brought into the way.

CHAPTER XXIV

REAL INTELLIGENCE

THE ADVANCE OF THE SOUL depends upon the gradual unfolding of your REAL INTELLIGENCE. This is MY WAY, and it must be YOUR WAY, for we are both comrades on the road to Truth. We do not know what ultimate Truth is. We do not know what God is. Our way is constantly changing, but we learn that there is no past, no future, only now. It is this eternal Now that is our reality.

Indeed I recognize the changes going on as not being of me. I AM. Nothing disturbs my center of spiritual gravity.

And right here may be answered that question which, in some form or other, is so often asked by those who are curious in a kind of half-hearted way to know more of the Truth, but whose educated sense of things prevents them from detaching themselves from the material world.

They say, in effect:

What difference does it make? You are not any happier than we are. You seem to be always upset about something.[1] Your vaunted spirituality does

[1] See my preliminary chap. "READERS!"

not appeal to us on practical grounds. How can you know anything more than we do, when you are forced to use the same material terms?

This criticism has been well put by James Leuba in his book, "The Psychology of Religious Mysticism." The distinguished author says:

> However it may be produced, ecstasy is ecstasy, just as fever is fever whatever its cause. The truth-kernel of religious ecstasy is no other than the truth-kernel of narcotic intoxication and of the ecstatic trance in general. Beliefs in divine presence, in divine union, and in illumination or revelation come under the field of unusual and abnormal mental phenomena.

Now that is true enough from Professor Leuba's standpoint. There has never been any question in my own mind that a large part of religious ecstasy is not only abnormal but strictly pathological. In my own observation, I have seen women grow quite mad from simple religious beginnings. Undoubtedly human, carnal impulses have turned many mystics into abnormal types, and in particular these complexes have run out into sexual images and violent sexual practices. Also, it may here be noted that whole groups of human beings have been infected by widespread aberrations. Witness the long line of religious atrocities; the Inquisition, the New England witch

prosecutions. In our own time (as for example the Scopes trial in Tennessee) we have seen whole communities of people betray the extremest evidence of a very low mentality. But these areas of what may be called abnormality (although this term does not completely cover the ground) are displayed not alone in groups and in human beings of low mentality, but they also occur at intervals in human beings of the first rank. The greatest men in history have been subject to them. No one can read and study the lives of Julius Cæsar, Henry VIII, Napoleon Bonaparte, St. Paul, and Abraham Lincoln, without being convinced that there are depths and strains in all human beings which are quite inexplainable in any laboratory. Professor Leuba makes the same mistake that all humanely educated people make, of trying to define something which cannot be defined, of trying to fix, as truth, something which cannot be fixed. If he could reduce all human beings and their eccentricities (to put it most mildly) to the confines of a pathological laboratory, or even to that of a philosophical class-room, in a very short time he would be driven into the corner which all investigators on the human plane find themselves.

A friend of mine who was for many years confined in an insane asylum, and who was very violent, told me that one day, as he marched into the chapel with

the other inmates, a psalm was chanted, and suddenly, without his knowing why, the thought came to him, "I am David." As nearly as he could describe it then, he felt himself from that moment in a kind of rhythmic harmony with the universe, and from that moment he began to recover. In a few months he recovered entirely; so much so that he became a hard-headed man of business (actually a Wall street broker), and is to-day, so far as I know, a respectable member of society. He told me the whole affair in less than fifteen minutes, as if he were explaining a bond issue.

What Professor Leuba, in common with all other intellectual and materially educated people with slight spiritual discernment, does not understand, is that there is nothing abnormal about what I call REAL INTELLIGENCE (which, as I have tried to make plain, is spiritual understanding).

If we read the mystics and all religious introverts from this laboratory point of view, we shall fail to understand them, precisely as so many parents fail to understand their unusual children. In my own lifetime, I have seen several boys absolutely destroyed by this lack of understanding on the part of their parents. Also, what I here affirm and reaffirm is that there is a great deal more mystery and confusion about the material world, and the evidence presented,

than there is in the spiritual world. The things of the spirit are quite simple, very clear. They are so simple and clear that it seems almost impossible for educated skeptics like Professor Leuba to accept them.

REAL INTELLIGENCE does not go beyond matter, in the sense that it claims to know something which materially educated people like Professor Leuba say cannot be known.

On the contrary, REAL INTELLIGENCE stakes everything on the unknown. The moment this Truth is perceived, there is no more difficulty. The stumbling-block is the ordinary human standard of logic and reason. Of course we use our minds. Of course we think. Of course we reason. But every atom of intelligence we have, the sum total of it all, repudiates the things of the world and all of its false testimony. We give it a test, and after test after test we find that it always fails us.

If this were not true, don't you see that every biologist would have no more need to do anything? He would say:

"We are through. Everything has been discovered, everything determined."

Instead of this, from week to week, from month to month, and from year to year, new biologies are constantly being issued, each one giving the latest result of some new observation, these added data making

everything different from what has been known before. The sum total of human knowledge consists of an endless series of doubtful bulletins.

Also, in our own personal lives we see how much of a failure everything material is.

What then do we do? We use all the intelligence we have to ascertain the truth. Said Christ:

"Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

My answer to Professor Leuba, and to all other skeptics, is:

"Abandon all your previous learning, detach yourself from it, forget it, and meditate on the syllable OM."

Of course by the syllable OM I mean any syllable that will be the key to an understanding of that which must ever be unknown—the Universal Self, God, Tao, whatever we choose to call it. Meditate on Totality.

If we begin here—first by repudiating the world, and then by going back to the very source of our being through these key words—we shall suddenly find ourselves face to face with the unknown, and from this great moment we shall be free.

To be free is to be everything. Every personal problem, NO MATTER WHAT ITS NATURE, will be solved. Not all the professors or scholars in the world can do this for us.

This does not mean that these personal problems will vanish. Indeed they may multiply. But we have been presented with the great key of Reality. This reality is always the unknown. If this seems a mystery to mortal sense, again my reply is: Try it. Do not be misled. Do not be led astray.

"I am the way, the truth, and the life."

Do not attempt to solve all problems at once.

When I came upon this great moment, I found myself suddenly confronted by the Lord's Prayer. I thought I knew that Prayer. Yet to my later amazement, I knew nothing about it. I meditated upon it for more than a month. The words OUR FATHER cannot be comprehended in their spiritual significance without constant meditation.

Let me take the word Self, as being a key word. This self is set into the world of nature, and the world of nature is set into the world of Self. We feel nature a reality in us; we feel ourselves a reality in nature. Nature is in ourself as fact, as beauty, as law; that is the proof of experience, the thread that runs crosswise on the loom of being.

When we limit ourselves by attempting to define anything completely we limit our faith by so much. This very attempt at definition is in itself perfect evidence of the futility of man-made systems. It is composed of egotism, ignorance, a temporal manner.

CHAPTER XXV

MEDITATION

A FEW words about meditation.

So few there are, apparently, who understand what it means that I shall here give a few directions.

The saints and the Eastern mystics have created a number of different rules to classify meditation. First there is RECOLLECTION, which, as the name implies, is a kind of going over one's self.

Then there is silent prayer, which consists in fixing one's mind on God, going into the utmost nothingness.

The rule for Yoga is to keep the eyes fixed on the end of one's nose. Extraordinary results are declared to follow.

Contemplation may lead one over the sufferings of Christ, visualizing the stations of the Cross. There are other rules, each one differing according to the temperament of the instructor and the age in which he or she lived.

The saints had many ecstasies and visions. We can now afford to dismiss all of these, and simply

ask ourselves: WHAT IS MEDITATION? Also, what purpose does it serve? For detailed descriptions of the various methods, the reader is referred either to the "Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius" (Catholic), "The Treasury of Devotion" (Anglican), or "The Way of Perfection" by St. Theresa (Catholic). Also the various publications of the Yogi Society.[1]

We must first remember that religion, and in particular spiritual development, is a severely practical affair. For our present purpose, it is unnecessary for us to go over the history of mysticism, or to know particularly what others have done before us.

What we are now concerned to discover is just why we should meditate, how we should meditate.

The answer to the first question is that meditation is the only way we can acquire a sense of the presence of God the Unknown. To the second the answer is longer, and follows:

Meditation consists in removing from the consciousness the sense of all material things. This means all earthly desires, hatreds, jealousies, everything, in fact, relating to the senses. After this has been accomplished (and it requires a long time to accomplish it even slightly), then meditation consists in realizing

[1] See also chap. 5 in "Meaning and Value of Mysticism," E. Herman.

the presence of God. Thus there are two stages. First the uncovering, or cleaning out. Second the act of concentration. To achieve even a slight measure of true meditation is to overcome by so much the sorrows of this world.

And this can be done, or approached, only by an understanding of its necessity. Without this understanding, no progress can be made.

Meditation is the gateway through which, by slow stages, are revealed the transcendent glories of the spiritual universe. But these glories are not dependent upon the mere working of the imagination. It is comparatively easy and a very puerile performance, merely to sit down, close one's eyes, and imagine a lot of angels in white robes, to hear Celestial music, and to feel one's self being transported through space in a twinkling. All this is simply a material occupation.

There is a spiritual sense which enables us to apprehend, at first very faintly and then more surely, the reality of the world beyond. This sense is obscured most of the time, but it is always there. It is precisely the development of this sense, or rather its emergence from the clouds of materiality surrounding it, which makes worth while any effort expended. Meditation is preliminary. It may be

followed by examination or introversion, recollection and contemplation. These terms are unnecessarily confusing.

But caution! Only by the very purest intention, only by a really broken heart, can one enter this sacred gateway. It is very easy to be misled. You cannot lead others through it. All one can do is to indicate the way. Once having had the experience, the veil of materiality drops. It is true that this veil rises again and that we live once more in the world. But life is never the same. So many errors, however, have obscured the understanding of this way that I am constrained to point out a few of them.

The first is learning. Back in our minds are stored up a countless mass of sense impressions, which lie there ready to spring into life at the slightest sign. From our births we have been read to or have read of fairies, gnomes, ghosts, spirits; and later on we have probably read something of the visions and ecstasies of the Saints. Besides we have read of angels and have absorbed the symbolism of our Bible, not at the time understanding that it was symbolism.

The result of all this is that when any one of us thinks he has had an illumination or seen angels, he must wait and not take too much for granted. The real spiritual vision is not a material one, nor is it based on the senses. It is an unfolding. A singu-

lar thing is that the recollection of it often comes after it has taken place. This is only because of our erroneous sense of time. Spiritual vision is constant, and everything else is fleeting. Therefore, when we recollect having such a vision, it is only because at that so-called instant we are actually having it. Everything that we are sensorily conscious of here is unreal, but by unreal I do not mean that it is n't actual, but only that it is transparently fleeting.

God, you see, is constant.

What we experience is a so-called illumination, which is, as nearly as it can be explained, an arresting of our consciousness in such a way that we are taken out of ourselves; and we get what are termed by some as communications, but which I think are better defined as certainties.

I assume, although of course I do not actually know, that the so-called spiritualistic séances are shot through with threads of these certainties, so that often the mediums are able to penetrate to a distance. I am not going to explain spiritualism just now, because that is not my theme; all I am at present doing is to give some idea of spiritual illuminations as the result of meditations. I have thus been enabled, quite a number of times in my life, to predict with absolute certainty the future; but you will understand that, in making this statement, I am by no means

indorsing spiritualism, nor am I even attempting to indorse any so-called system of communication or prophecy. The point which I now make is that, inasmuch as there is no time, it is just as easy to say what will happen to-morrow as it is to tell what happened yesterday, once having the conditions right.

I have never had any special belief in spiritualism or automatic writing, and, in the light of my experience, neither do I now believe in it. I take, I trust, much higher ground than this. These things are merely manifestations of the great beyond, and are doubtless as simple as breathing once we understand them.

My Ego is a fixed point in the universe, and all around me the phenomena of nature, men and women and so on, are revolving. It is the different combinations of these things which create in my carnal mind a sense of succession and time. Once I understand that all these things are illusions—that is, fleeting—and that I AM is fixed, then it becomes quite easy to understand how the material world can be overcome. Naturally the process of overcoming it is an internal one. It has to do with the internal consciousness, and this brings me to meditation once more.

Meditation, it must be repeated over and over, is not idle dreaming. It is concentration on a particular

thought, and, as I have stated, it can be acquired only very slowly; even then it constantly evades one. But once having practised it, one finds in it the greatest source of one's internal happiness.

The best way for a beginner is to take one word at a time and meditate on that word. The Indians use the syllable Om, which to them stands as a symbol for the Eternal. That shows great advancement; it shows that Unity has been achieved in their thought, and that this syllable Om comprehends everything. They seem to be very much more advanced than we are (I refer the reader to the Upanishads). But for a beginner on this plane I suggest as an example the word NOW.

Now is the present, it is To-day, it has no future and no past. What you do is to call up to your recollection at first—quite easily and naturally—this idea of now, and all the relationships to it. For instance, if one could live in the Now always, then all worry would cease—nothing could happen to one. You will be amazed to discover that this word NOW is an infinite word—that from it, as a standpoint, you brush aside all the paraphernalia of your consciousness.

You will also discover how your thoughts begin to wander, how terribly difficult it is for you to BRING OUT all the different aspects of this word NOW.

You will think of to-morrow, you will lay plans, you will allow yourself to go off into day-dreams. But never mind.

In connection with this word NOW, as a kind of exercise, repeat the Lord's Prayer mentally. Dwell on each word, and endeavor to realize its full spiritual meaning as you go along. Consider the phrase, "Our Father Who Art in Heaven." Do you understand the meaning of OUR FATHER? Do you see that the word Father does not mean a material person, that it is only symbolic of guardianship, that the word Jehovah comes from breast, meaning shelter?

In this way go through the entire Lord's Prayer. You will be sorry to learn that you cannot hold your mind to it, in spite of all your effort. Do not allow this to discourage you. In that respect, our minds are all the same.

The great thing is that in spite of your wandering, you have actually made the attempt.

All meditation consists in controlling consciousness in such a way as to retain it in a motionless position—it is immaterial whether, for this purpose, an external object, an idea, a concept or nothingness, is focused.

HERMAN KEYSERLING.

CHAPTER XXVI

SELF-CONTROL

So far as the spiritual life is concerned, self-control is in a sense material. It is the material reverse of meditation and may be compared with a rudder. It is absolutely necessary on the material plane, and upon its cultivation depends a large part of one's spiritual progress.

The nature of self-control, however, I am convinced is but little understood. It is likely to become mixed with will power. There is no such thing as the training of the will, so far as results are concerned. It must be plainly understood that unless some definite intention or real spiritual urge lies back of our physical organism, no results will be accomplished.

It is true, superficially, that habits can be induced by practice, just as a dog can be taught to hold out his paw. The spiritual understanding of these things can only be acquired by meditation as I have shown.

Real suicides almost invariably conceal their intention under an outward show of cheerfulness. Those who threaten and talk about it rarely do it.

This shows how careful we should be in estimating what others are thinking.

A habit follows as the result of intention. If a man has a habit of smoking, and the intention to stop is strong enough, he will stop. Physicians state that where they instruct smokers that smoking is injurious, in the majority of cases they will stop smoking without difficulty. They thus use fear.

The same thing is true of any other habit. Once present to the victim a sufficient reason why the habit should be broken, and he will break it. Augustine relates that his mother acquired a habit of drinking, from tasting the wine she brought up from the casks in the cellar. One day a servant reviled her, ridiculed her, called her a drunkard. Monica was so horrified at the accusation that she immediately stopped the tippling.

All skill, no matter in what direction, is acquired only through previous desires. One must be interested enough to make the necessary sacrifice. Self-control, therefore, is simply the measure of control one has acquired over the organism in order to insure certain desired results. Actresses thus train themselves to shed real tears, Yogis train themselves to suspend the action of the heart, and men have gone without food and water for incredible periods.

Among the Lamas of Tibet there is a practice of immuring religious devotees in caves.

It must be evident, even upon slight reflection, that self-control—that is to say, that governing faculty, call it what you will, which enables human beings to force their bodies into all kinds of tortures—is something the compelling motive for which lies in the original intention. Conversely most of the geniuses have refused to become repressed and have therefore been broken on the wheel of their particular period. Now this original intention is distinctly not an act of will. It may start in some sudden impulse, and this impulse may gather force, so that the individual is carried along through a series of ever unfolding developments. But it is certain that we, in our mortal minds or intellects, do not create these impulses. They come in large part from what the psychologists term the herd mind.

We are the prey to a thousand suggestions during the short space of twenty-four hours; these suggestions fly into our consciousness like so many evil insects; their object is to frighten us. When we give them reality, they do frighten us and often bring on the very evil which has thus been named.

Self-control, in any direction, starts somewhere from an original impulse. Thus we have the mother's

knee complex. What we imbibe at our mother's knee is stated to be the impelling influence that guides us throughout our lives; and it is unquestionably true. Huxley, the great scientist, never quite got over his feeling for the Bible, although he was an agnostic, because it was associated with his mother's knee.

If all this is true, can it then be said that we are simply the victims of circumstances, and that what we are now is merely the result of some long forgotten whim on the part of some one now unknown to us? The answer to this simple question uncovers the very foundations of all life itself. I propose to answer it as simply as possible.

What I AM at any given moment, or at all moments, is either an immortal soul, or it is not. I am the only one who can decide this. Nobody can help me do it. The reason for this is that, if I am an immortal soul, then I shall go on beyond all the people who surround me, because I know they will die. I mean by this of course that these bodies I see will disintegrate. It therefore follows that, *as an immortal soul,* in a hundred or a thousand years, as we reckon time, I shall still be going on, but these bodies will then be gone. They cannot help me, therefore, to decide anything. And these two choices are all I have.

If I decide that I am only a mortal body and that

in due course of time worms will eat me, that I shall pass out and not a rack remain, that I am here for only a few years and then gone, then my problem is merely to accept the situation like a good sport and become a gambler. As there is absolutely nothing else for me to do, I am forced to depend upon the tools which are here, to get along as best I can while I am here. And so I look over the situation. I consult doctors, and size them up as best I can. I study psychology, biology, history, and whatever I think will help me get along as best I can until the fatal day comes when they dump me into the ground. If it pays me to be unselfish, then I am unselfish. I am in a large gambling-hall, where the stakes are human lives, and I keep my hand on the trigger and my eyes on my chips and play them as best I can.

That is the way most people live, because that is what most people believe. Is it not plain in these circumstances that it is perfectly useless to attempt to learn anything, because the time taken to acquire it would prevent one from keeping himself alive earning a living, and besides, when he had it all learned, in a world built up of chance such as I have indicated, the thing would be constantly changing so that he would have to learn it all over again?

We shall come to understand self-control much better, when we come to understand the word SELF.

The dictionary rather lamely defines self as "a being in relation to its own identity." From what I have written it must be easy to see that self is not something original with us. We did not make ourselves. Self-control, therefore, is merely the control which is exercised over each one of us by the universal carnal self. Every movement we make, every thought we have, is imposed upon us by a system of society which extends back to a remote period; and inasmuch as history itself is merely the record of man's consciousness, it follows that self-control is the control which the universal carnal or herd mind exercises over our Egos. I am led this way or that, I am influenced, I am sublime or ridiculous, I do or I do not, according to the pressure of this universal carnal mind upon my so-called will. We have only to consider the way the radio penetrates distances, to see how this mind works. Epidemics, in short, all scares, all beliefs held lightly by so many, are merely the raw material of this carnal mind. There may be a hundred thousand people to-day practising a certain system of home exercise. Where did they get it? One man invented it. His cleverness in inventing it consisted in the skill which he himself derived remotely from this same carnal mind, to invent something which has, as they say, a wide "appeal." Thus all these people are doing something which has been

imposed upon them by some one else, who in turn has acquired the art from still some one else to broadcast his idea.

And from the standpoint of this carnal mind—if there were nothing else—it is perfectly correct to say that Life is luck. A successful man is merely one who has been fortunate enough to attract to himself more confidences than scares. He has acquired a material bulwark, which, temporarily at least, protects him from society. In the end he must die. Nothing can save him from that. He knows it, but consoles himself with the reflection that he is better off than the majority. Thus those who start in life with good health, who are trained by this universal self to earn livings, or who inherit wealth, move along smoothly in the stream of life and bask in the sunshine, as long as it lasts. Occasionally, or perhaps we should say too often, they lose their balance, and destroy themselves. Sometimes they wake up to something better, and then succeed in casting themselves loose from the shackles of materialism.

It is evident therefore that self-control is not the individual's successful effort to control himself, but that self-control is merely the hypnosis we are under, in being controlled by the carnal universal mind. This mind is seemingly kind. It provides us with education. It offers us employment. It maintains

us. Indeed it often rewards us richly for our efforts. But all the time it owns us. And it scares into doing things it wants us to do.

Do you doubt this? Ask yourself honestly how free you are. Are you free from the thought of debt? Of hunger? Of sex? Of carnal love?—and by this I mean the attachment which comes from long habits of association with those close to us.

Possibly hitherto you have thought yourself free from these things, simply because they have allowed you to think so. You must remember that the herd mind was here long before you came in your mortal body; it is skilled beyond your feeble capacities to deceive. It is the main business of this mind to cajole you into the belief that you are in control. It is precisely this pulling the wool over your eyes which enables this mind to control you. Make a list of all the things that you are attached to, that you fear, and that you love in the sense I have given. Even your worldly reputation is one of your most cherished possessions; you are actually afraid that it might be taken away from you—and by another. Lear exclaims:

> How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
> To have a thankless child!

And Jacob exclaimed to Reuben:

. . . then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

This illusion which we have, that we control things, is due to a secret fear which we suppress by our attitude of outward confidence. Not only don't we control anything, but everything controls us; and, so long as we believe that there is no God and no hope beyond the life of the senses, then we have nothing else to do but submit with as good grace as possible. The whole literature of agnosticism is shot through with this often noble pessimism. The writers declare that, while they see no hope for the future, they are bearing up as best they can. Many of them console themselves with the reflection that, having examined the utterances of those who do believe, they cannot see that these misguided spiritual people are any happier for their belief.

Self-control, as we ordinarily understand it on the material plane, is the control we are all under from the combined aggregate thoughts of mankind, as a totality, rolled up over a long period of time. Therefore we are puppets. If there is no God, but merely chance, then the most subtle thought of the most advanced philosopher is simply the latest emanation of the same old skull made over by chance into a new and convincing form.

If, however, we, through some crisis in our lives,

come suddenly to discard this belief in a carnal self, believe that we are immortal, then the veil is suddenly parted. Also, we know absolutely that, while so far as this world goes we suffer equally with agnostics—we may suffer more—that this now does not matter at all compared with the revelation which has come to us; and it is precisely this revelation which these gentlemen cannot understand. How can it be explained to them? I know of no way.

Right self-control is merely God control. By placing ourselves literally and completely in the hands of our Creator, we are thus controlled not by the carnal mind, but by the God mind. Herein lies the importance of rising above the claims of the senses, of standing serene on the high citadel of the City of Perfection, of meditating on the upright love of God and the liberty which through Christ has become the great truth for all of us.

CHAPTER XXVII

SEARCHING OURSELVES

SELF-EXPRESSION does not carry any penalty but is a God given faculty and ought to be exercised. It is given to us for that purpose. It is only wrong when it runs out into self-dramatization, and particularly when we seek to justify ourselves by assuming that we are making sacrifices for others, or when it is the outcome of spiritual ignorance. That is, we are not necessarily guilty; we lack understanding. Our real business lies strictly with ourselves; and even in the giving of advice, we should be very careful. A young man in whom I am interested writes to me that he has made a change in his business and suggests some of the difficulties he is under in his new position. Now from what he tells me I know exactly what he should and should not do, and I could easily sit down and write him a long letter of advice, giving him an outline of his course of procedure, which, if followed, would undoubtedly insure his success.

But if he really understands this advice, he will

already be acting upon it, because he is extremely anxious to succeed.

If he does not understand it, I am taking up my own time and his in attempting to explain it to him.

Also, if I tell him something which may be of present benefit to him, it is much better for him, in the long run, to learn this for himself. His mistakes may be more valuable than his progressions.

There is still another and a much more important side to this question. And that is the invisible.

All thought is instantly communicated. This is not spiritualism, neither is it any kind of so-called telepathy. Frankly I do not know what it is; I know that it works.

If I think thoughts of hatred against any one, invariably these thoughts come back to me in some externalized form. They may be delayed, but they always come back. Also, if I think thoughts of love and of encouragement, these thoughts come back to me. In distributing gifts, therefore, I have discovered for myself that it is much more important to do this silently than it is materially. I have had many evidences of this. Suppose I have a misunderstanding with some man. If, instead of cherishing a thought of resentment, I say to myself that perhaps after all I may be mistaken, and bless him instead of cursing him, invariably the misunderstanding is

straightened out within a short time. I have seen this work so long and so constantly that it has come to be a settled faith with me never to allow myself to cherish resentment, but, instead, to distribute spiritual gifts.

So far as this material world of intellect and brains is concerned, I have seen intellectuals, arrogant in their intellectual possessions, suddenly wilt and fall on their knees metaphorically, acknowledging that there was some power beyond them they did not understand but bowed to. Every system of thought, from Heraclitus to Santayana, has its reverse side, and for every disciple there will be an opponent. Everything is affirmed by some one and denied by some one else. What is materialism? There are as many definitions as there are cults. What is consciousness? It is what any one chooses to think of it. That two and two make four would seem to be indisputable, yet it is disputed, because the fact that two is only one number in an infinite series gives it a relationship to such an infinite series which raises serious questions and mathematical speculations which for the present it would be beyond my task to enter into, and it is not now essential.

But, you say, if I deny that anything can be known, if I even decline to make a definition of anything or

to indorse any definition already made, am I not preaching a doctrine of utter nothingness, leading nowhere? And if so, what becomes of the many personal problems which press upon us every hour of every day, some of which I have indicated? What becomes of humanity with its manifold agonies, its incredible sorrows, as they appear to our consciousness?

Have patience, and read on. For the present, I refuse to be enticed into any argument, to betray myself by defining, in material terms, anything. Frankly, indeed bluntly, that is a matter which, in the nature of things, can concern only myself. I am uttering truth for myself alone, and in itself this is what makes this truth universal, gives it its universal power of penetration in all directions. If I were uttering this truth for the benefit of what we term others, then it would be strictly limited to those others, for I know of others only in material terms. I am nothing of what any human being who reads this thinks I am, but only what is known universally to be true and individually separate. I am only that which you feel or which you are moved to feel, this unfolding in you often coming into your spiritual consciousness as an event, after it has taken place.

If we have never engaged in self-searching, the first trial of it will alternately frighten us and appal

us at the almost unbelievable multitude of ideas which are opened to our inner vision. This, whether we are willing to acknowledge it or not, is the approach to the spiritual life.

This process is not what is commonly known as introspection. Neither is it remotely related to ordinary thinking or planning, that is to say, scheming. Neither is it remotely related to that madness which comes as the result of anxiety, in which the terror-stricken victim tosses and whirls himself around in feverish mental circles which may, and often do, draw in narrower and narrower, to the point of causing self-destruction.

Inasmuch as I deny all material and intellectual systems, plans and definitions, and this in obedience to the rule of Christ, this self-searching comes without effort, as the result of prayer, and in this case the prayer is simply the mental asking for light, that is, understanding.

What then happens? This: one enters quite calmly and sternly into the arena of the consciousness, and with the courage which is given one for the occasion (a courage much higher than the kind we know as physical) one proceeds to challenge every thought one has. WHO ARE YOU? WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? WHERE DID YOU COME FROM? WHITHER ARE YOU LEADING ME?

It is within this arena of thought that all the battles in the world are fought and won or lost. And the list of secret and subtle attachments will be amazing to contemplate in their nakedness, when exposed. All popular sins have first been invented by society and then tabooed. Alcohol was thus invented. Sex, which in the animal kingdom is a momentary and strictly utilitarian affair, has been nursed and developed under the pressure of economic law by the so-called highbrows of society (the dramatists, poets, and novelists) and labeled as the chief sinner of all. Yet it lies wholly in one's thoughts, as Christ pointed out. Other popular sins are such as breaking the Sabbath (its advocates rebuked by Christ), murder, arson, and theft. Hatred, resentment, envy, pride, self-pity, covetousness, and lying are everywhere secretly encouraged and discretely denounced and coddled by the churches, while universally practised by individuals. These are the real sins. Drunkeness and disease, theft, murder, and so on are the outward externalized forms of these secret and subtle sins.

Your attachments in thought are therefore what count, what determine your destiny. Go over them fearlessly in your self-search, and you will be startled. God requires absolute self-surrender and detachment from everything—from your loved ones, family,

friends, possessions, and material self. Every thought that clings to something must go by the board. Consider: that something is in reality nothing. It is nothing because it is here to-day and gone to-morrow. The false gods and graven images we rear up are not those which can be seen and touched; they lie in the secret recesses of our souls. Have you ever tried to find the hidden faces outlined in a puzzle picture? Your secret sins are like those false faces. Look at your internal self first, and you will detect nothing. Keep on. Your salvation depends upon it. The process of self-searching is actually a kind of mental and spiritual house-cleaning.

The approach to the spiritual life must always be preceded by this work until in course of time self-searching becomes habitual. The Hebrews actually became the chosen people merely because they started out in the beginning to think they were. At the moment of their scattering, they did not understand that this dispersion was the very thing to give to the world a permanent religious consciousness.

"We should strive," declares Democritus, "not after the fullness of knowledge but after the fullness of understanding."

In all ages, the problem has been the same, the habit of standardization, of making plans and systems, and thus setting up one's senses against the in-

finite God. It seems now to be worse than ever, doubtless because of our enormous natural resources, which give the impression that we can get along very well without help from above. As long as we have plenty to eat and drink, why worry?

Yet the eternal fact that no ultimate reliance can be placed on matter is too well established by the loss of friends, family, and fortune to be disputed.

The approach to the spiritual life must be accompanied by this self-surrender. "The necessity of a new birth," declares Scofield, "grows out of the incapacity of the natural man to 'see' or 'enter into' the kingdom of God. However gifted, moral or refined, the natural man is absolutely blind to the spiritual truth and impotent to enter into the kingdom; for he can neither obey, understand nor please God."

Yet to the natural man who scoffs, relying on his man-made intellect, but who is secretly curious, it may be said that the mystical faculty, which enables us to talk about the thing at all, is itself evidence that there is something more left in life than what we see and touch and bear.

As for the difference between spiritual thinking and brain-thinking, the first is constant and pure (though often obscured by the mist of matter), and the second is inconstant and impure.

In brain-thinking (physical or material) there are

any number of grades, classified according to the quality and extent of the material education received.

Spiritual thinking is a constant unfolding.

Thus books like this one do not appeal to brain-thinkers, who denounce them as obvious, crude, and so on. Nothing is more tiresome to a brain-thinker than spiritual thinking. And nothing is more spiritually unprofitable than pearl-casting.

Indeed, to be understood by any one, a book on the spiritual life must be read at the right receptive moment; otherwise it is likely to be wholly misunderstood.

CHAPTER XXVIII

SYMBOLISM

MANY attempts have been made by those who have gone beyond the veil of matter to explain their meaning to the material sense. The most common example is the apocalyptic literature. It is perhaps best shown in the books of Daniel and Revelation. Among writers outside of the Bible, one of the most advanced and scientific thinkers is Swedenborg. Nearly all of the mystics have relied upon some kind of symbolism to express their spiritual meaning.

What appears as silly and obvious to the material mind—the mind classified as intellectual—is so only because this mind looks at the outward and stereotyped form of the words, not understanding that behind their often trite exterior is a spiritual reality that deals with universals. Thus the expression GOD IS LOVE can have no possible significance for the agnostic. We invest words with our own living experience, and if we have had no experience of them, then they mean nothing to us.

In reading the Bible, and indeed all mystical

literature, it is essential to understand that there is no other way to convey spiritual thought except through material images. Most brain-thinkers who are agnostics, in writing against spiritual thinkers, betray the grossest ignorance. We may dispute Swedenborg and St. Augustine, St. Theresa, John of the Cross, or the unknown author of "The Cloud of Unknowing," together with the Song of Solomon and the other books of the Bible, but at least we should understand the conditions. The book of Jonah is a good instance. Agnostics and spiritually ignorant people talk about the whale and Jonah; they do not have the slightest idea of the real mystical meaning behind the words, or of its marking one of the greatest moments in the spiritual history of Man.

Just as symbolism has been abused on its own part, inevitably much has been read into it which is not there; but to overlook it entirely and assume that the writers are writing about actual objects, when in reality they are merely using these objects as the only means they have to express an invisible truth, this is quite another matter.

In all ages writers have employed symbolism to express their conception of the truth. Merely to cite one example among countless others, in the early part of the great war H. G. Wells wrote a novel entitled "Mr. Brittling Sees It Through." Here the character

Brittling was symbolic, expressing the attitude of the average Englishman. "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters . . ." here the psalmist has used the allegory of the sheep to express God's care. Within the past two decades Sigmund Freud, the Austrian, has shown that symbolism makes up nearly the whole content of our dreams, the human mind working automatically in sleep, through natural objects to a symbolic meaning which has to do with some unsatisfied desire on the part of the dreamer. Our vast collection of modern words (some 450,000 in an unabridged dictionary) are so many symbols, or deal with the relationship of symbols, all forming an infinitely intricate network, very much like a quicksand. Yet to those who have transferred the direction of their minds from material brain-thinking to spiritual or metaphysical thinking the simple spiritual verities underneath this network become constantly more discernible.

(Those writers on psychology and biology who deal with folklore, myths, early religions, etc., and who are inclined to relegate the development of religious symbolism to the laboratory, should remember that they themselves are subject to the same conditions. Symbolism, however and by whom it is used, is merely

a practical way of conveying real thought. There is just as much symbolism in a psychology or a work on the highest mathematics, in proportion to the thought, as in any book which deals with spiritual interpretation.)

The success with which we thus come to attain spiritual reality, or a state of tranquillity, depends, as I have already stated, upon the success with which we are able to abandon all attempts at relief through making plans, inventing systems or depending in any way upon the senses, the reason being that the interposition of these plans on our part (the outgrowth of this material sense of things) acts as a cloud of unknowing between ourselves and God. Thus, through lack of faith, we actually prevent the release, through us, of universal Truth, which in its perfection would give us the power to overcome the world.

Practically speaking, we are unable to give up.

Most of us have had the experience of doing this on a small scale and seeing what wonderful results follow. Thus the hardest workers among us—the workers who strain so hard—are often the poorest because they are afraid to give up anything. They spend their lives in precautionary measures.

It is one of the great moments in the life of any human being when he resolves to abandon everything and give himself up completely to God's guidance.

Tribulations and adjustments undoubtedly follow, but peace comes in the end.

While these adjustments are taking place and there are inevitable setbacks, we are too likely to contrast our condition with those who, without apparent spiritual development, are materially successful. It is a mistake for us to assume that people who thus live on the material plane are necessarily unhappy from their own point of view. On the contrary they are logically correct—from this point of view—when they dispute the assertion of their unhappiness. This whole matter is not one in which comparisons can well be made, as the values are so different. Also it is one of right understanding. I have seen many men go on for years seemingly happy and contented in their material surroundings, healthy, tranquil, confident in their state, and suddenly collapse, actually destroy themselves. Now, during this serene dream period of their material contentment, how is it possible to arouse such men to any sense of permanence? Who wants to be interrupted when he so thoroughly enjoys himself? Certainly no rodent would like to be offered a trap when he was enjoying cheese. Of course, in a real sense, we are here dealing with illusion. We are giving personality to that which is impersonal. There is no actual personality to evil.

But this is the whole problem of civilization.

And it happens that the men who represent the educated intellect are the most stubborn cases.

This is what has driven so many mystics into seclusion, made them do penance.

And the real question is: Can we live in the world and yet not be of it?

That depends quite largely upon one's temperament.

In this respect each human soul is its own best judge. In our most tragic moments, when we have lost God and are in complete eclipse, we turn to the recluse who, in poverty and retreat, in prayer and self-torture has abjured the world, and learn from him how to find God. On the other hand, we know that some of the world's greatest mystics have lived in the crowd; we know that Christ himself consorted with publicans and sinners and ate and drank with them, and there is no evidence that he was afraid to be what we term a natural man. On the other hand, there is much evidence that many ascetics were abnormal and far apart from the true way.

Of course some of the most religious men have been the most learned. In our present life it does seem, however, that when skepticism is the outgrowth of an intellectual process it is much harder to overcome.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE TRUE GUIDE

It may well be asked at this point, as has so often been asked before (and answered): What other guide is there than our own Reason, even when we enter the mystical realm of the spiritual?

The correct answer to this question is that God, the unknown, the source of our being and the creator of our Reason, once we give up our possessions, guides us in an ever upward series into the development of a spiritual intelligence. This comprehends and transcends our natural Reason, indeed subordinates all of our merely intellectual processes into a deepening understanding of Truth.

Those who are now approaching, or have passed, the threshold of the spiritual life, in this humble and obedient attitude, are experiencing the most sublime of all moments, while at the same time they realize that their position is never static. Their old sins (errors), like shed skins, still cling. They are imperfect beings; new vistas of hitherto unknown realms of Truth constantly unfold before them; they stumble;

indeed at times they turn back, but they know where they are going. They are undismayed. They have caught their initial glimpse of the spiritual universe, and nothing now can deter them from pressing forward.

How can this come about if, as I have recorded in the beginning, the only thing certain is uncertainty, and God must ever be the unknown?

A few brief words will suffice to help clear up a mystery, which must, however, in a sense ever be a mystery. For we are very finite.

Words being symbols of thoughts, just as money, in itself useless, stands as the representative of material power, and some words being more comprehensive than others—GOD, MAN, FATHER (as applied to God), LOVE, CONSCIOUSNESS, SELF, UNIVERSE—let us return once again to the word MAN.

Within the enlarging circle of this word even the idea of God is enclosed because, before I can think of anything at all, I, a Man, must apprehend the idea of God within my own consciousness. This consciousness I recognize innately as being a necessary part of Me. From this I deduce, by an inevitable and immediate necessity, the idea that there is one universal Man and that of this mystical Man I am a mystical part. I do not attempt to analyze this

any further, to indulge in vain speculations about it, for a very simple reason. I believe that I did not create this Man, that a Being did this who is necessarily unknown to me because of my limited consciousness, and therefore, in thought, I refer all things to him. I apply this rule to all my thoughts, referring each one of them in turn to him. I refuse to make plans. At first confused, and in many instances obliged to start all over again, yet soon, as I build up my spiritual experience, I begin to get a sure sense of guidance. Experience shows me that God the Unknown always appears at the right moment.

From this great moment of approach to the spiritual life, I am changed. Something has happened to me which, from now on, becomes a constant source of wonder and joy.

It is always through our "inability to define Him" (I quote from a previous paragraph) that we are enabled to see God.

At this supreme moment, and always, I am utterly alone in the universe; that is to say, the universe, including all others, lies within this circle which I name under the title MAN. Thus I hold dominion, in so far as I am able to detach myself from the thought of any part as being real, while becoming more firmly attached to the whole, and this whole is one with God, the unknown. It is Totality.

It is precisely this recognition that I am finite that gives me the certainty of God. By abandoning my limited consciousness to the idea of the unlimited, which at first can be done only through blind faith, I gradually—as it seems—acquire a spiritual start.

From this moment onward, I am concerned with Truth in its ever unfolding spiritual aspects.

CHAPTER XXX

THE NEW OR DYNAMIC PSYCHOLOGY[1]

GENIUS has never been accounted for. All analyses of its ideal content have failed.

The great masterpieces of the world have been produced without effort. By this I mean that they have first risen spontaneously in the mind. The actual labor of production (which naturally has been enormous) has been only a fulfilment.

Every masterpiece existed somewhere, that is to say, within the consciousness. It rose in the consciousness full-fledged. Simply speaking, we say that it was thought of first before it was made or manifested on the material plane.

No matter how men work, their labors are but a carrying out of some invisible force, which acts upon them or runs through them.

Conscious effort to produce almost invariably defeats its own purpose. It is the universal testimony

[1] This is the dullest chapter in an otherwise stirring book. I advise the reader to skip it. Were I capable of remorse, I should omit it altogether.—T. L. M.

of all creative workers that the things "came" to them, and that all they did was to put down, or record in some manner, what they felt.

Our sensual consciousness has in it no creative element. It combines and rearranges; it prepares the creative ideas which come to it unbidden. And these ideas always come best when this consciousness is passive. Practically speaking, there is no difference between this sensual consciousness and a gardener, except that consciousness does not even plant. It rests on itself, and the ideas come. This great truth is felt instinctively by all men, and that is why the immaculate conception, as a symbolic representation of Reality, can never be dislodged from the Soul.

The problem which we always have before us is whether, from the ground of our limited consciousness, we can build up an accurate belief in a God.[1] Those men who are classified as materialists assert that we cannot do this. They declare that we are strictly limited by our senses, and that logically and reasonably, and indeed by all the accepted standards of truth, we cannot reach out beyond the senses and be certain of anything. They dismiss all creeds and religious beliefs as so much nonsense; they are contrary to the religious, or perhaps I should say spirit-

[1] Caird's "Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion" is an indispensable guide to the understanding of this problem.

ual, people. Between these two groups are a host of indeterminate thinkers who are what is known as open-minded. And among these are a respectable number of scientists—biologists, psychologists, and so on.

It is now a fact acceded to by many reliable observers, that not only are there two opposite points of view reconcilable, but that actually they are drawing together. In short, science and religion are not only becoming friends, but it is not impossible that within a reasonable time they will develop a common unity. There is less divergence between science and religion as a whole than there is between the various sects within the churches as a whole.

So far as manners and right spirit are concerned, the scientists distinctly have the best of it. It is inconceivable that, among themselves, and no matter how far apart they are, scientists should display the same deadly hatred and meanness which are, for instance, shown by the fundamentalists and the modernists.

In all branches of science the spiritual idea is beginning to take form. As research workers everywhere push back the limits of their investigations, they continually ask themselves what the source of life is. And in doing this, they are compelled to reflect upon their own personal problems in connection with their

researches. Thus in scientific circles we have already many notable men who have developed a fine faith, a true Christianity. And when they succeed in doing this, their faith is as a rule much higher than those who have been brought up in an orthodox environment.

The process which reveals the dawn of spiritual truths out of the labors of purely materialistic investigators is one of the most interesting spectacles in human nature.

It is not now to be expected, nor is it here affirmed, that the process I refer to has any more than begun, or even that it would be admitted by the large body of orthodox psychologists, who will stick to their materialistic lasts.

Also, I wish now to make it quite plain that I am doing no more, in my restricted space, than make a brief survey of this field, the literature of which is so vast.

Up to the present time psychology has moved forward, subjected to continuous errors, and the victim —as is usual in any experimental science—of every theorist and every crass thinker. Thus as a whole it presents a curious mixture of utter falsity, shot through with veins of pure understanding. Nothing is established, and changes are constantly taking place. It is only necessary to examine even superficially the

works of leading thinkers in this field to see their wide divergence.

Psychology has been slowly formed out of philosophy; the two merge into each other, and it is often difficult to tell where a philosopher ends and a psychologist begins, or vice versa.

Thus we have, to mention a few names at random, the divergent views of Schopenhauer, Hegel, Kant, Hume, Locke, and laterly von Hartmann, Bergson, Myers, and James, a study of whose works must convince any one that we are hopelessly involved in theories and contradictions. But out of this mass of error and truth, and due, I think, quite largely to leading Americans (for instance, James, Dewey, Prince, and others), there is emerging a kind of practical working creed, now but dimly outlined but becoming more definite all the time.[1]

It is scarcely possible to overestimate the great usefulness of the American mind, which brings to these problems an intense practicality, and is much more mystic than appears on the surface.

The American mind cuts through all unessentials and insists on holding its dominion over the present and on raising the standard of life and thought, considered in its severest practical aspects. Indeed the whole purpose of this book is to show that there is a

[1] See appendix.

technique of spiritual life, and that this spiritual life is one with everyday life.

The new or dynamic psychology therefore is a stern taskmaster. It takes nothing for granted, while at the same time it makes due allowance for feelings, although these feelings must give a strict account of themselves.

One principle laid down by the new psychology is that if we wish to ascertain the truth about anything we must consider it first as a whole and not any part of it. Thus, with a single gesture, Darwin and the evolutionists fade out of the picture at once. Here is what Auguste Comte remarks:

> As soon as we are dealing with the characteristics of animal life, we ought to take Man as our starting point, and see how his characteristics lower in the scale little by little, rather than start from the sponge and seek how they develop. The animal life of man helps us to understand that of the sponge, but the converse is not true.

"It would be folly," adds Dr. Gustave Geley ("From the Conscious to the Unconscious") to this quotation, "to seek to understand the locomotive by a study, however complete, of a detached bolt or the spoke of a wheel."

We can see very plainly that if we examine the work of Darwin and other evolutionist workers in this light, as interesting and valuable as this work is, by

no possible means could they ever arrive at any solution of Man himself or of the Universe. Also the facts brought forth by Darwin have fatal gaps. There are the insects, and even a cursory study of insects makes any tenable theory of evolution impossible.

In short, as I have shown more explicitly elsewhere, no matter what part of the universe we examine in its material aspects—astronomy, biology, geology, physiology, agriculture, or geography—we are always obliged to refer each one of these material areas to our individual consciousness, which is the sole arbiter. When any scientist comes to me, with the natural enthusiasm which I so admire, and tells me of some new discovery he has made in his own field, and shows me how he did it, I am delighted with his explanation and by so much get a new thrill. My range of material and intellectual speculation has been widened, and I am deeply grateful to him for adding thus to my pleasure. But I know, quite simply and instinctively, that he has done nothing more than this; namely, to increase my data.

Thus it inevitably and surely follows that the only way in which I myself can proclaim truth through any data is to hold up the data as an illustration of an example of truth and let who will believe. It is not necessary for me to produce any evidence. For what is evidence? Evidence is merely any part of totality.

It is the only necessary for me to proclaim. And this is precisely why the way of Christ is the supreme way. You do not have to believe him if you do not want to. That is your own affair. But if you do care to believe him, then you have only to prove in your life that what he said was true. For instance when he said, "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" he is not producing any evidence; he is merely telling you. It may take a lifetime on your part to see the truth of that saying, but you are certain to see it sooner or later.

Here is a great and universal principle of truth, something that is almost startling in its revolutionary suddenness; namely, that evidence, or data, never can prove anything. And that is why in the material field there are such endless controversies which always end in blind alleys.

What either I or any man can do is to announce or proclaim a truth. Many will not believe it. But that does not matter.

Now it seems to be *true,* if you regard the problem from a strictly limited area, that we cannot be conscious of anything we cannot see or feel or smell or hear in some way or other. Also it is quite useless for me to present any data which will make any one believe that there is a life beyond the senses.

Suppose I say that we are so limited in our hearing that we are conscious of only a very small line of vibrations (wave-lengths), and suppose I illustrate this by producing an instrument which immeasurably amplifies the area of our hearing; that is, I give an actual demonstration that there is really something quite beyond any man's normal ear to hear? My materialistic opponent will immediately exclaim: "Well, what of that? All you have done is to show that matter is more extensive than we supposed." He will not be convinced for an instant that there is any spiritual quality which will enable us to be conscious of anything else but the material under the dominion of the senses.

There is nothing superficially mysterious about the radio, although the process is an invisible one. That is, it can be accounted for (as much as any material thing can) by data which have been gathered and which alone have made it possible. Of course scientists actually know that you cannot really account for anything—for a rose, for a birth. But that only means that we do not know.

The ablest agnostic does not scorn the possibility of knowing anything. He admits freely that anything *may* be possible. All that he insists upon is that in the present state of our ignorance we simply do not know.

On the other hand, I say: "Here is the truth. Believe it or not."

And so we find advanced psychologists regarding the consciousness as a whole first, and then discovering that into it come strange things, impulses, creative forms, and so on, out of what they have come to term the Unconscious.

We know this to be true because we can feel it ourselves. Every day things happen to us which cannot be accounted for on any rational or logical basis.

Without the slightest volition or initiative on my part—indeed when I am most silent and relaxed—I have a great idea, which springs into form in my mind even before I can stop it and in a short time bears actual results. From whence did it come?

Psychology, or psychoanalysis, tells me that it comes from what is termed my Unconscious. I am immediately interested. Is this thing something which I have known as instinct? I read what Dr. Geley says:

> It is well known that the instincts of animals are as innumerable as they are marvelous. They have in common the characteristic that they allow the creature to act spontaneously, without reasoned thought, without hesitation or grouping, and to attain the desired end with a certainty with which neither reason nor training nor impulse, can compare.

He gives many examples, not only of animals but of insects—marvelous mysteries. He shows that new species spring into life without rime or reason and that of no theory of evolution has ever been able to account for the flight of birds.

> If new species appear abruptly and immediately become stable, the theory of innumerable and slow transformations under selective or adaptive influences is definitely ruined as a general and essential theory. . . .
>
> The chasm which separates the perfect insect from its larvan abyss in which the Darwinian and Lamarckian theories are hopelessly lost—is testimony against its evolution by the classical factors of selection and adaptation. . . .
>
> From the psychological point of view the leading characteristic of the insect is that it possesses pure instinct almost without a trace of intelligence.

If we digress for a moment, and take—almost at random—any creative artist among human beings, we shall discover an equal mystery. Take Kipling's "Jungle Tales." There are sentences in these tales which must convince any one that Kipling could by no possibility have used any formal intelligence. They actually make one feel as we instinctively know animals feel. That we term inspiration.

Is it not now evident that if we are to arrive at any truth at all, we must regard everything we know as a Totality, because if we regard this EVERYTHING as

anything less than a totality, we shall fall short of the truth by so much?

It must now be increasingly plain that any definition of God short of totality (which must be the Unknown) is merely putting one's self in the same dilemma in which the psychologists find themselves, where they seek to invent terms and definitions for something which cannot be defined by any limitation.

But just as soon as any psychologist starts out to seek the truth, he always *tends* toward totality, and also tends as a natural result to reduce the number of his terms. Thus Dr. Geley tells us:

> everything in biology takes place as if the physical being were formed of a single primordial substance; organic forms are mere representations. Therefore, the first term of the biological problem is the essential unity of organic substance.

The second term is applied by the necessity of admitting a superior, organizing, centralizing, and directing dynamism.

This, as we come to see, is merely another term for God.

Again:

> It is not matter that governs the world, but a dynamic and psychic element.

It follows from all this, by an inevitable sequence,

that the Unconscious is God, or the totality of everything which lies outside of the limits of the conscious.

The great problem which all of us have is of course to account for what the Unconscious does to us. How can we love the Unconscious, when we do not know what it is or what it is going to do? Here is a vast, indeed infinite region of uncertainty, which contains everything that we long to possess, and which, from its unseen depths, hands to us from time to time, in a constant stream, all our blessings as well as all of our seeming misfortunes. It brings us our gifts, our noblest impulses. It also—through material agencies but none the less miraculously—brings us material blessings.

The truth is—as we finally come to see—that it never gives us anything bad, but only *seems* to do so. A calamity is thus a void. When the gap fills up we see it no longer as a calamity.

Dr. Geley says:

> Every investigation, every theory, every philosophical concept which does not allow the Unconscious its legitimate part (which is the weightier part) is at once falsified in its essence and in its teaching.

He quotes from Beaunis:

> Subconscious work does not produce weariness like conscious work. . . . And I would say to all those who live by

the work of their brains, to those who follow science, literature, and art, "Let the subconscious do the work, it never gets tired."

All creative people know that their best work is done without effort.

Dr. Geley:

> The origin of subconscious capacities is not sensorial, for these capacities are inborn. The range of subconscious capacities transcends in every direction the categories of the sensorial powers. . . .
>
> The higher inspiration, intuition, and genius, are totally independent of acquired knowledge.

This ought to show us how close to God some of the psychologists are drawing.

CHAPTER XXXI

REPRESSION—SUPPRESSION

What appears on the surface of human life is only the very inadequate expression of what has taken place in the region of what, for want of any other term, we call reality. . . .

GILBERT CANNAN, "RELEASE OF THE SOUL."

ALL depression is due to repression of some sort. Disease rises from repressed desires. Thus Napoleon, Woodrow Wilson.

At some time every one doubtless has had the experience of suddenly being released from some form of repression or suppression. We become involved in some complex, and any effort to extricate ourselves only make matters worse. We submit to the increasing pressure with what courage we may summon, rebelling against it with what passion we have. Perhaps in a moment the pressure is off, and we bound into exultation. A common example is the relief a man feels who fails in business, after the bankruptcy is announced. During his enforced seclusion, where the suppression has become acute, he has almost gone mad. When, however, the thing is "out," the joy

comes, although his material condition may be worse than ever.

The books on psychology, and particularly on psychoanalysis, are full of the stories of lost complexes. Yet strange to say, or perhaps not so strange after all when we consider the divergence of opinion among the psychologists, their books have but little to say about the real nature of repressions.

The difference between the two words, "repression" and "suppression," is this defined by Webster:

> To suppress, as here compared, is to put down or keep back completely; to repress is to check or restrain.

Those of us who claim citizenship in the City of Perfection can well afford to look out upon the psychologists, not with condescension, but at least with the natural concern one must feel for those who are really so close to coming in and yet are not quite able or willing to find the way.

The launching of psychoanalysis upon an unsuspecting world by Freud, Jung, and others was a great event in intellect. It changed the whole content of the literature which succeeded it, leaving in its train a host of writers who were influenced greatly by dream contents, libidos, complexes, inhibitions, regressions, depressions, and so on. Many doctors took up the cure of people through this new art or science, and

to-day it is a considerable part of the whole content of prophylaxis. That is, it is one more thing added to the host of healers of all sorts.

After it was launched, a reaction set in, because Freud, it seemed, had gone too far in his exploitation of sex. Besides, while many quite wonderful cures at first were reported, it became evident later on that there was an almost equal number of relapses.

Still, allowing for all these offsets, psychoanalysis as a method of treating people is fairly established.

Although it has become surrounded by a mass of words and phrases of a technical nature, it can be defined quite simply. Freud's almost first case will be enough for our purpose. While he was practising as a doctor, a woman came to him in distress, who insisted upon telling him about herself at great length. He was naturally bored, and tried to get her to stop, but she kept on declaring that it did her good to talk. She finally cured herself by her talking. The whole description of this case is set forth by Freud in his "General Introduction to Psychoanalysis." From this he began studying the content of dreams, with the result that he arrived at the *complex*, which is nothing more than a distressing experience which sticks in the mind, is submerged in the unconscious depths below, while from it follow many difficulties, either physical or mental. This is unconscious repression. The

cure lies in the physician's getting the patient to uncover; that is, to tell all about himself, not omitting any fact, until he gets back to the experience or complex that has caused the trouble. As soon as he talks about this, brings it up, his cure follows.

It would be impossible except at great length, and and it would be quite unnecessary, to describe the vast literature of psychoanalysis which has risen since Freud made his famous (or notorious) discovery.

That literature must be recognized. But if my readers have followed me up to this point, they will already have perceived that I am concerned with the whole science of living, both here and hereafter, not alone with the brain but with the whole man.

If you were in any sort of trouble and wished to try psychoanalysis, you could do nothing about extricating yourself until you had "read up" from Freud, Brill, Prince, and a host of others. If you shelved all this and just went to a psychoanalyst for treatment, you would not be sure whether he was doing you any good or not. Your regular doctor might scorn the whole thing.

This is why the majority of people do not stop to investigate the claims of a new creed or a new theory. They have no time. Life is too pressing. On the other hand, that is also why so many of them fall victim to any charlatan who comes along. When you

have a pain you will do almost any foolish thing to get relief.

The one characteristic common to all scientists, whether they be biologists, geologists, or psychologists, is, as I have stated in my last chapter, that they invariably begin their investigations and secure their data from a fractional part of the whole consciousness. Now this method, of course, is valuable and in many respects necessary. But its limitations are obvious, because, unless you are at the source, unless you are ready to grasp the totality of things, at any moment the most important truth—the truth upon which everything else hinges—will escape you.

For instance, Freud first investigated dreams, and was able from this to assert that we could cure a complex by exposing it.

In actual practice, however, while the cure followed in some instances, the patient often died from other causes which had not come into the zone of treatment.

The world has always been run by a majority of invalids. Many of the greatest men and women have been physical wrecks and, from the medical standpoint, failures. But the distinction between these men and women—who made no effort to take care of themselves—and one whose whole idea was to exploit a method of taking care of one's self, is obviously

very marked. That the poet Shelley, or the poet Poe, or Byron or even Pasteur or Oscar Wilde or Napoleon or anybody who has been great, should wear himself out and possibly die prematurely or disgracefully, is of small consequence, the span of material life being negligible in comparison with the deeds that are done. But a man who has a system of treatment or thought which he believes in, and is not able to demonstrate at all, should be subjected to close scrutiny. Paul declared that he had something the matter with him which had been given to him by God as a kind of discipline, which he could not rid himself of. Yet he lived to a ripe old age and, if we may believe the record, was finally martyred.

We may, however, dismiss all this speculation and use our common sense, and at this point simply say that it stands to reason that where so many elements are to be considered as are revealed by the total consciousness of any individual, you cannot expect to get certain results when you deal only with a part of that consciousness. It is very much like trying to keep all the prisoners in a jail with only one guard, instead of surrounding it with all the guards you have. Even at that, you never can be certain that some one will not get out.

Here we have a psychoanalyst, a spiritualist, a regular doctor, a new-thoughter, and ever so many more,

each one of whom has made an investigation of a small part of the human individual.

You can readily see that no human being who lives would ever have the time, during one life, to investigate the claims of all these "experts." Before he could do so he would die a natural or unnatural death. Here is a man who claims that heredity is everything, another who claims that heredity is nothing.

In dramatic contrast with all of these claims, consider the supreme simplicity and practicality of Jesus, who simply said, "I and my father are one."

It is a mistake to suppose that he was not a scholar. Merely to know the Old Testament as accurately as he did involved great scholarship. There is no record, so far as I know, of his every paying any attention to any schools of thought, except to dismiss them all—"Blind leaders of the blind!"

So far as we know there was never anything in the life of Christ that was either repressed or suppressed. He had no complexes. He ate and drank what he pleased, broke the Sabbath as it was kept according to law, went everywhere, and was absolutely free in every thought or action. He never hesitated for a moment to reply to any question, and indeed often replied before the question was put. (He knew what was in the other's thought.)

He was thoroughly familiar with the law and re-

spected it, *as law,* for practical purposes—"Render unto Cæsar—"

The great thing which he wanted to make clear, and which he died (mortally) to make clear, was that a man who lives utterly and completely without any complexes or suppressions is free, that nothing can ever really touch him, and that if his body is killed he will rise again triumphant.

For some reason, which I cannot quite understand, this fact has never been sufficiently brought out.

For although Christ himself was sinless just because he had no repressions, immediately after his death Paul and other of his followers began to lay stress on sin. Thus, by slow but inevitable processes, the inferiority complex became firmly imbedded in the Christian consciousness, and it is only within a comparatively recent time that any attempt has been made to dislodge it.

And by a singular paradox, this is being done for us by the so-called atheists and agnostics, in addition to the other scientific radicals.

I do not hesitate to say that so far as repressions are concerned I am against repressions, I am with all of these friends.

I am with them when they talk against that kind of religion which makes every man Jack a miserable sinner.

We cannot escape the penalty for our own conduct, no matter what we are, atheist, Methodist, or agnostic. If we hold thoughts of hatred, lust, or avarice, we must suffer the consequences.

But do you not see that Christ did not hold these thoughts? Why should he or any one else, who wishes to be free?

It is literally astonishing how blind people are to the truth about Christ. In the course of time it will be plainly seen that while Paul undoubtedly was the main factor in establishing the Christian religion, he was also grievously defective in his method. I do not wonder that the mad philosopher Nietzsche (who has had such a wild influence over so many members of our younger generation) would have felt as he expressed himself about Paul.

Of course Paul had to deal with practical conditions. He saw his people wallowing in muck, and capitulating to all sorts of horrid things—lust and murder and scandal—and it was natural for him to play up the sinner.

Paul could only denounce sin without perceiving that in thus doing he was playing it up for future generations, while at the same time he was doing a far worse injury to the cause. He was producing a progeny of grovelers. We have them with us yet.

Jesus did not do this. He made small distinction

between sin and disease, except to indicate very plainly—that which we know is so true—that sin is the cause of disease.

He knew, and said plainly, that sin was wrong thought.

Much more than this, he showed the utter worthlessness, the inutility, the absolute asininity, of wrong thought. The contemplation of all this wrong thought was what made him go to the cross willingly. Is it not strange that we cannot now see this, and that Paul's erroneous conception of sin has obscured the picture?

That weakness has been the predominating cause of all war since then. It has done as much harm to the real Christianity as any one cause that can be named. If the religion of Christ, as he preached it, could have been kept clear, that is, sinless, there would have been no Inquisition, no wars.

Paul knew this instinctively, although the consciousness of it was obscured in him. He knew it when he exclaimed, "The thing which I hate I am."

We are coming now—very slowly—to see that we are truly sons of God, that we cannot be guided by any investigator or research worker who merely takes a *part* of the human consciousness and tries to build a theory that will do for *the whole*.

Thus we are beginning to reconcile certain things

which have formerly been puzzling. We are beginning to see that the criminal is not a criminal at all but only a victim.

And it is likewise a fact that these psychologists, these thinkers, these investigators, are also, although quite dimly and in most cases quite unconsciously, beginning to turn to the supreme psychology of Christ which stated, "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do."

Here again is Dr. Geley:

> Moreover, we judge the tree by its fruit; it is, as we shall see, by that method alone that all the phenomena of life and consciousness, all collective and individual evolution, and even the meaning of the universe, can be understood.

In short, "By their fruits ye shall know them."

The distinguished author, although he would doubtless be the last to admit it, is here echoing the words of Christ.

I repeat that what the psychologists call the Unconscious is their own feeble approach to God. We do not know what God is, as already explained in a previous chapter. We do not need to know.

What we know is that our bodies are unreal.

That the thing which we call Self is the only reality.

That we are conscious of only a small part of what

IS, and therefore we must fall back upon our faith in the Unknown (call it either the Unconscious or God —terms matter little), and that when we do fall back on this we must inevitably fall in line with the teachings of Christ alone.

The whole object of Christ was not to condemn or punish but to heal. In this he was above the law.

So long as we occupy this conscious life we must for practical purposes conform to the law, and here is where our suppressions come in. Brill and others show clearly that the problem of getting on in the world depends upon our conforming to the educational processes which the world forces upon us.

Here is the way Brill puts it:

> Thus it may be said in truth that the individual begins with "no" from his very infancy, and continues to declare it more and more vociferously until death. His life, one might say, is one long struggle, one bitter revolt. In the light of this principle, the idea of absolute independence and happiness takes on a rather sombre aspect. For no matter what you may do for the individual, he cannot in any sense be happy or dependent, for what he really wants is something that goes back to his infantile life. In the very nature of things, then, we can never be satisfied; no individual can ever be contented with his environment, there is always room for improvement.

He adds:

Now the significant thing to note is that although society has actually succeeded in training the individual to forego and renounce and thus to adjust himself to prevailing conditions, we nevertheless find when we examine his intimate psychological recesses, that he really never foregoes his desires absolutely, that he has a way of realizing them. In dreams, symptoms, and in manifold conscious activities of everyday life the individual is still able to realize his wishes.

From all this, we come now to see quite plainly that the thing which we call sin is something which is closely associated with disease. If we examine the world about us and also ourselves, we see quite plainly that our carnal bodies are very much like unruly horses. If we lock ourselves up in the stable for days, we kick through. Any number of things are being thrust at us to give us relief from our inhibitions, our complexes. And this process of release is called sublimation by the psychologists.

Sublimation means that we divert our urges. We listen to canned music, we play golf instead of roaming the woods as formerly, and if we are girls working in offices we read confession magazines. All this is merely the method taken by nature, if you will, to compensate us for being alive in a world of machinery.

Think of all these hideous substitutes for beauty

and natural living, in a world so beautiful! To miss so much really worth while, when we are only transients—visitors! Still, let us be cheerful.

If we fail to submit to this process of continuous adjustment (and we all do fail more or less), then we fall sick. For the error in our thought is thus manifested. Psychoanalysis shows this as well as mysticism or spiritual healing.

As we think, we are.

If, however, we must adjust ourselves, that is, if we must repress ourselves to the extent of conforming to Cæsar, how can we on the other hand be free, be partakers of the liberty of Christ? For it must also be remembered that although Paul erred in his conception of sin, he had great moments where he realized what freedom was. He plainly indicated the way of escape, although he still continued to grovel.

I not only suggest, but I know that the remedy is simple.

It lies wholly in our thought, through self-discipline.

It would be ridiculous to assume that we can ever in this life escape the limitations imposed upon us. There are times when we yield to temptations, times when we give up, or when we break loose.

But—and this is the whole lesson—we now know where before we guessed.

The way is quite plain. It lies in our thought before our conduct, for our thought determines our conduct.

In concluding this chapter, just as a matter of plain common sense, let me contrast and sum up the two methods; that is, the method of Christ, and the method of scientific research or psychology, call it what you will.

If you are committed to the second method, then at once you are confronted by a list of authorities a mile long. You are never sure what repressions to sustain or what to get rid of. You do not even know what repressions you have on hand. You are therefore always in doubt about what course of action to take.

And the slightest observation will convince you that the great majority of people are in this dilemma. What is a vacation? Is it not a form of release? Beginning with the first of April the vacation complex ties up a whole mass of people in a yearly interrogation.

The same thing is true of the problems of what doctor to have, how to bring up your children, how much money you shall spend, what you shall eat, what you shall do from hour to hour.

Listen to the ordinary conversation of human beings. You will be appalled at the trivial nature of their talk, of the hidden anxiety under it all, the sense

of strain, the evasion, the bluffs thrown—and all this on the part of the most highly educated and successful as well as the inchoate mass.

More than this, there is never any end to the puzzle. New theories are being advanced at every turn in the calendar. No sooner has one cure proved ineffectual than another is advertised. Stocks go up and down; operation succeeds operation. The more you get into this mess, the worse you are. And that is why the majority of people hurry, hurry, hurry. To sit still is torture.

Remember there is no middle ground. You have only two bets. God or Mammon.

Let us now consider the first course. The Christ method.

You do absolutely nothing in yourself. At first you simply sign up.

After that it is solely a matter of conduct, and you learn, gradually, what to do.

Naturally and inevitably you make mistakes. You have to retrace your footsteps. It is not easy.

But you know where you are going.

Your direction is secure.

CHAPTER XXXII

HEALTH

MIRACLES are no news. They are constantly happening. What is termed the Truth, or the Universal Principle of Creation, is constant. We are the ones who are changing, because we have sense perceptions, and these sense perceptions are unstable material. If we go back through history and look at the great spiritual leaders we see that each one of them expressed the truth from his own angle. He held his mirror up to Truth and cast back a few rays. We therefore cannot strictly be followers of any one. This spiritual healing-power comes through anybody who can realize truth or the Christ. This person may be very defective. Paul was such a person. All along through history we have this truth expressed through material personalities. Planets, shining by reflected light.

We know disease by the fact that it is always disagreeable. It is what we term inharmonious, or discordant. It does seem to me so strange that nobody apparently understands that this very inharmony is merely a notice from God that we are living imper-

fectly. How else are we to know this except in this way? This does not mean at all that we are guilty of anything, but simply that we need to be healed, and that only within ourselves is the power to heal ourselves. No one else can do it for us, and it is precisely this truth that puts out of business all of the cults and systems of healing.

There never could be any system of healing which would work, for example, as automobiles are turned out in a factory.[1]

One of the greatest obstacles which mankind has to contend against is just this obsession about making systems, about standardizing everything, as I have already stated. In America we have all gone mad on the subject. The efficiency engineer, the physician, the preacher, any one with a system!

The Truth is the Truth. God is God. Harmony is harmony. You cannot make anything else out of these All-principles. We adjust ourselves; we do not

[1] The psychists themselves are in a bad way. They are no longer materialists. These apparently solid ninety-two elements that make up our world, once so final, distinct, immutable, have now become just various and interchangeable aggregations of points of force. So matter has vanished into something insubstantial, it has become an illusion, and that illusion we call energy, another inexplicable mystery itself, just waves of intangibles moving at the rate of 190,000 miles a second in the third mystery, which is neither matter nor force, namely, the ether.

DR. FREDERICK PETERSON (N. Y. WORLD)

adjust our environment. The cure lies within you.

The widespread skepticism about the power of physical healing, through spiritual understanding, is due to the erroneous assumption that it occurs (if it does occur) like a material treatment; in short, that some one must do it for you, and that even if this were occasionally possible, it would be necessarily accidental. Our whole material experience rises up in our consciousness to keep us from seeing the truth. A thousand and one cases we know testify against spiritual healing. When occasionally we read or hear of people cured of tumors or other seemingly fatal things, we are certain that it cannot be proved, and we dismiss it as the morbid utterances of half-wits. Yet the whole matter becomes absurdly simple when we "cast out" all the material standards and come to see that any physical healing can only take place first in thought and second in the acquiescence of the individual involved. I cannot consciously heal any one else merely by wishing to do so, but if he is willing and has faith I may thus help him in closing up the gap in his consciousness. The material result is certain to follow. This result can never be proved except to those who are willing to believe it, and precisely the same thing can be said of material evidence, which is never believed except when those who listen wish to believe. No two eye-witnesses ever agree.

But you are always willing to believe the one who comes nearest to what you yourself believe.

All disease, no matter what its nature, is merely an arresting, or what we may call a gap, in spiritual harmony. We see this spiritual harmony expressed in the movements of the stars, which are so exact that they are mathematically beyond our comprehension, although astronomers are constantly spreading the area of our consciousness to take in further mathematical series. We do not hear the sun move. Indeed, spiritually speaking, the sun continues to revolve around us and not we around the sun, so that, in this spiritual sense, the Bible is strictly accurate. When we come to see that any Man (the eternal I) is always the center of the universe of consciousness, then it is equally certain that "I" cannot revolve around anything, but that all things revolve in accordance with the internal law of consciousness, or in the Kingdom of God which lies within. Therefore, when we come to understand the Bible in this spiritual sense, the sublime truths set forth therein become apparent.

Disease is evil, and we do not know what evil is, except that, as it is constantly changing, it is therefore unreal. It was assumed apparently by Mary Baker Eddy that she was the discoverer of this truth, yet even the most cursory examination of the literature of mysticism shows that it has always been proclaimed in

some form or other. Even Catholic writers have made this plain.

What confuses the novice is the problem of how, if evil is unreal and disease is unreal, it can give him such pain. An immense amount of ridicule has been poured out on the unfortunate people who have been so persistent in stating this truth.

If Eskimos, who live in an intensely cold climate and are exposed to low temperatures, come down below the line of civilization, they catch diseases and die rapidly from consumption, just as mentally low-geared people of other nationalities do. It is well known that Irish-Americans, as well as unacclimated negroes, are highly susceptible to tuberculosis.

It may be asked, with so many accumulated beliefs and fears held in mass, how it is that we keep alive at all.

I have seen a wealthy man play poker with a professional gambler, who invariably fleeced him. Now the wealthy man could afford to lose some thousands, and the gambler could not. Yet the gambler played the cooler game, because he was accustomed to it. It is like this with diseases. What is poison to one generation will be absorbed by a succeeding generation with less harm. This is not physical but mental. We get accustomed to things mentally; thus we manage to survive a whole mass of diseases. Epidemics

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are always preceded by a wholesale fear of some sort, usually war or some national disturbance. Witness the plague in Athens during the Peloponnesian War, and the flu in America at the opening of the World War.

Now disease is real, just as evil is real, to our mortal or carnal sense. But if we come to examine it spiritually, we see it as a gap in the consciousness, because it is constantly changing and therefore must be unreal. This can be explained as follows:

If you will consider your anxiety about your troubles (disease, finance, etc.), you will discover that, although seemingly they have been the cause of this anxiety, it has always been the same anxiety. If, however, it was always present in the same way, you might give it reality or permanence: you might say of it that it was a real thing. On the contrary, this anxiety occasionally disappears. You are free from it temporarily. The one thing about it to be noted here is that when it does come back, it is the same old anxiety. It may vary in intensity, but like measles or chickenpox, you know it for just what it is.

What then is the relationship between your anxiety and your troubles?

This: that while your troubles constantly dissolve, the anxiety remains. It shifts, but it shifts from one trouble to another. For instance, we all know people

who are always being cured of something. They get rid of one thing, and go about and brag about the marvelous cure they have discovered for it. But shortly they have something else, until getting cured becomes a disease in itself.

Now does it not follow that if you get rid of your anxiety your troubles cease?

This is so simple that nobody sees it truly. It is the basis of all spiritual healing.

We must remember that the great mystics were not physically well. Many of them died young. It was said that this was due to exposure and the like. It was not. It was due to certain externalized forms of inward spiritual fears. Also: sexual disturbances, repressions. No one can read the intimate accounts of many of the mystics without perceiving this. In many cases, their one fear was that they might be too happy: they considered it wrong to be free from a sense of sin. They were constantly reproaching themselves for their too great indulgence in the joys of communion with God. Ruysbroeck termed this "spiritual gluttony." Mingled with all this was an undoubted sensual suppression, which sublimated itself in various spiritual forms, often approaching ecstasy. We call these things pathological—it does not matter what they are called. They are simple when understood in their spiritual significance.

Almost all ailments come from unfulfilled desires. And these desires are due to a spiritual lack. You cannot replace a spiritual lack with material things. That is why you cannot cure a bad habit by trying to curb it. The spiritual lack is invariably hidden, and this results in widespread misery. Once trace the thing back to its source, with a proper understanding, and the cure follows.

The fact that we suffer is a call from God to readjust ourselves. That is all there is to it. A comprehension of this simple Truth often makes the difference between life and death.

A great many people actually keep themselves alive in the same way that the professional gambler I have just referred to plays poker. They show it in their faces. They are constantly talking about "beating the game." They think they hold the cards against God. Perhaps the great majority do this. When we are being hunted, we develop extraordinary skill in evading our pursuers. That is a common truth of nature and of all animal life. Human beings confronted by the numerous diseases of modern civilization—all of which are tabulated and reiterated and labeled and card-indexed—acquire this sort of dogged resistance. Middle-aged men, who develop on their arm some sort of abrasion, or have a hidden pain somewhere, become a blight on their families for

weeks and months, actually terror-stricken at the very thought of cancer, just because this is the best advertised of incurable diseases. The same thing was true of diphtheria, perhaps in a somewhat lesser degree, before the doctors devised serums to counteract it. What were they really doing? Simply inventing something which allayed the combined fears of a great number of people. You may ask: How did it work at first? Answer: through faith.

I recall a doctor playing billiards one night in a hotel. He had a woman patient upstairs who had pestered the life out of the poor man. In the midst of an exciting game she sent a bell-boy down to tell him to come up right away, as she simply could not sleep. He sprinkled some chalk into a glass, ordered a spoon, and told the boy to take it up, and wrote her to take a spoonful every hour. The game went on, and the next day she told him she must have a prescription for that wonderful medicine.

You remember the old sentence, "God works in a mysterious way his wonders to perform." So there you are.

All forms of spiritual healing or occult healing, psychology, psychoanalysis, new thought, etc., are likely to be very dangerous in the hands of unscrupulous people, but fully as bad in the hands of sincere people who have not chosen to follow Christ in

their own lives and therefore have but a poor understanding of the truth.

One of the favorite expressions of these workers is that they are dealing with infinite universal forces, etc. Of course they are, but so is everybody. Moreover there is not the slightest mystery about these forces, except for those who do not want to see.

We speak of miracles with awe, as if they only take place by some special dispensation. Keeping alive at all is a miracle. Everything else is subordinate to that. And also nobody has ever been able to explain it. All the doctors, biologists, philosophers, and scientists in the world know nothing about the source of life.

Yet the source of life is something which is immediately apparent to any one who takes the trouble to spiritualize his thought. We know because we see how the thing works.

When a man comes to me with a pain and I show him that he is secretly afraid of something, and he suddenly opens his heart and confesses and tells me all about it, and when his pain immediately disappears, I know that something big has happened. Yet all that has really happened is that the man has been restored to his real self. It is a perfectly spiritual normal process.

Why then, you ask, is it that people cannot be cured

of cancer? And tuberculosis? They can. They are. In many cases, they don't want to be cured.

Here again we need to go slow. Almost all of the spiritual healers claim too much. In a sense, they are afraid not to claim too much. That does not mean for a moment that cancer may not be cured instantly. Neither does it mean that men may not, under the right spiritual conditions, live for five hundred years or more. All it does mean is that we see through a glass darkly, but as much as we see we heal. It is a reasonable proposition that you cannot heal a big fear as easily as you can a little fear.

If a man with chronic indigestion releases his fear and then overcomes the false idea he has about eating, and this man recovers in the course of a month or so, that is an easier thing than to heal a man whose chest has been devoured by a cancer. Yet the latter case is as easily healed as the first, always provided that the fear can be allayed. You do not have to go to spiritual healers to see miracles. They take place constantly in hospitals. The spiritual law works anywhere, even in a hospital. We must remember that material conditions, no matter what they are, never matter, so far as the Spirit is concerned. The best doctor is almost always the best spiritual healer, though he may not know it.[1]

[1] I have yet to meet an author who was not a hypochondriac. Saving only physicians, who are always ill and in fear of death,

My body in itself has no power to do anything. It does not secrete thought. Thought is universal, it is everywhere. Disease must come to me in my thought first and always, before it can be manifested or externalized in or on my body. When it is thus externalized and I become aware of it, I cannot always remove it at once, because my thought spiritualization may itself be defective. I have to learn how. This process is constantly going on. As this real self becomes more and more real, my body becomes more and more a mere appurtenance. Disease cannot affect it. Evil does not touch it. I move about materially anywhere, do everything, apparently refuse nothing; that is, I repress nothing. Yet nothing hurts me.

There is nothing mysterious or occult about this. You see it in working-people. Look at big men who are occupied with big affairs. Their minds are completely taken up with their work; therefore nothing gets them.

If you want to be free from disease, let your mind be completely occupied with the permanent, the real

the literati are perhaps the most lavish consumers of pills and philters in this world and the most willing customers of surgeons. I can scarcely think of one known to me personally who is not constantly dosing himself with medicines or regularly resorting to the knife. At the head of the craft stand men who are even more celebrated as invalids than they are as authors.

H. L. MENCKEN.

the unchanging. Evil cannot then touch you. You will be harmonious, you will be free, you will be healthy.

How can this be done?

By realizing what is called *The Christ*, but you should understand by this that the Christ spirit is not two thousand years old. It always has been. "Before Abraham was, I Am." Jesus was merely demonstrating this Christ spirit in his life. Jesus worked. It is doubtful if he was idle for a moment. I come now to the other half of healing.

The patient must uncover his secret soul. Somewhere there is something he is afraid to face. This thing he himself must drag out. In short, he must make a clean breast, confession. Precisely what are these secret things?

Well, they are quite simple. You see them in big head-lines every day in the newspapers. I have known men who secretly have wanted their wives to die. Too many cherish secret resentments against some one. You would be amazed at the extent of these secret hatreds.

Not only is there nothing mysterious about spiritual power, but when you come to understand it, it is the only real thing there is.

Resist not evil. Agree with your adversary.

Do you not see that this immediately closes up the

gap that evil has made? If your cat catches a rat, you will pet him and praise him. If he catches a squirrel, you will lose your temper. Is the cat guilty? What do you know about cats anyway?

This other part of the healing process, namely, realizing the Christ Spirit, is more advanced and possibly harder to understand. I do not think that it is always possible for the healer to understand it.

Let us suppose that you have been suffering from a malady, and that by the uncovering process I have indicated you disclose that this malady is due to a secret hatred you have ncurished, or that it is due to a sensual practice. Once you close up the gap by applying the truth, or it is closed up for you by another's applying the truth, your trouble must surely disappear.

It is, at that moment of discovery, unnecessary for me to go any further. No more talk is necessary. No more contact is necessary. But in my own thought, which is a part of the universal thought which—no matter how far apart we are—you share with me, I then begin to realize the absence of hatred, the absence of sensuality FOR YOU, while at the same time I realize the actual presence of the Spirit of Christ, or Truth. Now this Spirit is Reality, it is unchanging, it is harmony, it is what you choose to call it, as being True for you.

Do you not see, therefore, another in his real thought may make it harder for you to entertain your former error? He is combining in love with you. Then again, and this is highly important, he cannot do this unless his own thought is pure. His power to heal you comes not from himself but directly from God, just in proportion as he is able to realize God in his own life. But it is always up to you to fulfil the terms of the spiritual standard thus proclaimed.

It is incumbent upon the one who helps to heal you to love God and his neighbor, and in particular, to follow Christ. "Neighbor" here is universal.

Now when we reach this position in the spiritualization of our thought, our bodies become negligible. It does not matter particularly what happens to them, and therefore nothing happens to them. No vices get them although all vices meet them.

Because of a subtlety which the devil himself cannot beat, society in general takes a thing quite innocent in itself, and, by creating a fear against it, causes it to be labeled a vice, and thus makes it attractive.

When smoking was first practised nobody thought it was wrong or harmful. Imagine an Indian getting up an antitobacco crusade in the six tribes!

As soon as ecclesiasticism pronounced it a vice, then hordes of people were driven to smoke. Recently we have seen the effect upon women. I know women,

to whom smoking was violently distasteful, who keep at it just because they thought they ought to (as a moral duty!) and this because society has previously pronounced it a sin.

If men were free in their own thought, you could scarcely devise a more disagreeable punishment than to make a man smoke ten cigars a day by order of the police. It almost always makes people sick when they first try it. This is due to the mental repugnance which has come through long ages as an offshoot of the law of self-preservation, which makes men mentally dislike and cast out that which does not nourish them.

We can see therefore how these errors grow. And there are many of them besides smoking.

If you wish to stop smoking, give up the wish. Free yourself from the thought that it matters. Occupy your mind with other things, and do not allow it to be occupied with plans about not smoking or with speculations or anything whatever about smoking. Smoke all you want, but your very want shows it is in your mind.

It is so with all other things—troubles, diseases, discords. When they obtrude upon you, remember that if they seem to get you it is because you allow your mind to look in their direction, to dwell upon them. Turn your mind away from them, and they will vanish. Calm down. Cultivate faith.

Then, so far as healing is concerned, you will discover a remarkable thing. You will begin to see miracles in your friends and companions. They will say to you that such and such a thing is the matter with them, but later they will stop saying it.

You will notice that others will talk to you only about those things which you have mentally invited them to talk about.

It is also a good plan to keep silent. Do not give others advice or try to make them better. They may be much better than you. *They have a right to do what they please.* God knows more than you about how to care for them.

It is only when they come to you for help that you can realize God and thus clear the way in thought for them.

If you are afraid of anything, no matter how slight, go out to meet it mentally. If you are even afraid to meet it mentally, do not be anxious about this. Give yourself a chance to try again. You are bound to get the best of the thing in the end, because you can keep on trying; and while it never gets any stronger than it was at first, every time you try and fail and try again, you are gaining a little.

So never be discouraged about anything.

CHAPTER XXXIII

WOMAN

One of the greatest paradoxes in human life is the fact that man should receive from woman the source of his highest spiritual impulses, while at the same time he uses women to pander to his lowest sensual appetites.

Also, one of the saddest things in life is the way men read into women their own sensual impulses. A man whose mind has become thoroughly corrupted transfers this welter of corruption to every lovely woman he sees.

Lust always tries to brand its own base insignia into the brow of innocence.

A married man who is possessed by a woman in private loves to display possession of her in public.

Women from Eve onward, undoubtedly lead men into temptation. It is the highly carnal disposition of women to lure men. Also it is proverbial that when a woman falls, she sinks deeper than a man.

The efforts of men who pose as creative artists to make sex paramount in human nature never succeed

permanently, although in each period they are renewed. There is nothing new in sex. Every perversion hinted at or displayed openly in modern literature has been practised from time immemorial. The only thing new about sex is the fact that moderns think it is new. No sex motive in literature is lasting. All the big books contain little sex. Sex in the long run is exactly proportioned to the necessity for reproducing the species. To lose one's self in Totality is the only way to sublimate the sex urge. Nearly if not quite all excitement has the sex motive for its source, but that does not necessarily mean that it predominates. Any excitement is only a part working on the whole. Tranquillity is always totality.

Now the difference between a man and woman may be expressed in just this way: A woman does n't read into a man her own thoughts, but a man reads his thoughts into a woman. That is precisely why a man does not understand, when a woman fails to do what he wants her to do. For example, a husband will argue with his wife about expenses. He first reads into her his own attitude—an attitude which is grounded in his practical experience—and when she looks upon him with lackluster eyes, or changes the subject, he becomes wrought up over her intense obstinacy.

He thinks she knows but is just trying to balk him.

He transfers his own experience and alleged busi-

ness ability to her, and then judges her by the false standard he has created for her—which does not exist. That sort of thing causes a great deal of trouble.

As for all the sex stuff men read into women, that causes most of the trouble. Talk about the stockyards of Chicago—why, they are nothing to the way men slaughter the bodies of women all over the world.

I am not here arguing against sex or in favor of asceticism, but only against false standards.

But mere lust—which rises up in their own minds like a miasma—is not the only thing which men fasten upon women. They fasten upon women the idea that if a girl goes wrong she is naturally bad and will never get over it.

That is a lie.

The idea that because a girl goes wrong she never can go right, that she has that false thing called "a weak character"—is one of the GREAT LIES of civilization, fastened upon us by Priests for their own evil purposes.

Most of the supermen, if they are not dead and utterly forgotten, are still reviled by posterity. A first-class superman will, if let alone, always set the world back.

To understand woman rightly we must throw overboard all of the standards ever erected by man from the beginning of time and regard her with the eyes

of the Spirit. For a model, read what Christ said.

The causes of the downfall of woman sexually are economic. Man exploits women for money. Woman exploits herself for money.

A girl who has not been properly brought up—and so few are—finds herself thrown upon the world without support, and without any other method of getting it except to sell herself. It is unfortunately not only the easiest but in too many cases the only way.

A girl in these days, possibly in any day, should be trained to support herself.

Woman is not a mystery. If any man who reads this book doubts this let him try a simple—and yet possibly difficult—experiment. Let him purge his mind of all impure thoughts, scrap his lust, and bring himself to believe that women are just like men in their purity. Let him then act toward them as if they were not something to be pursued but just to be loved quite naturally.

Furthermore I will assert that this is the only attitude for a man to take in his sexual attitude toward women. Instead of degrading sex to the level of the barn-yard, why not admit its beauty and treat it naturally? Is it beautiful? There is nothing more beautiful. It is the visible expression of the act of creation.

The French people have a much better idea of sex than we have. But not all of their writers.

Sex instincts should never be repressed. They should be understood.

If men first kept their minds pure with regard to women, there would then be no displays (arranged by men managers) of naked women in theaters, because the audiences would not demand it.

In this brief survey I have merely hinted at some of the false standards. I leave it to my readers, IN THE LIGHT OF TRUTH, to fill out the picture. Let me now consider the real place of woman.

It has been my experience that all women have a much keener sense of spiritual reality than men. One reason is that they have not been so closely bound for many generations to standardized thinking. Perhaps the majority of them have not thought at all, and this has placed them on a higher spiritual level.

It is not by brain-thinking that progress is made. It is by spiritual development.

In the beginning women did the work while men roamed. Women were the executives. Men were the hunters, unstable, lazy, going by fits and starts. Women planned, made systems; and gradually the men followed the lead of women.

It may seem strange until you come to think of it,

but women became better thinkers than men because they gradually came to have more freedom for that kind of reflection which makes for spiritual insight. Men were intensely active. Women sat in the window and looked out.

When we begin to enter into a sense of spiritual reality, then the things which are necessary for us to understand in the material world are given unto us. Talk about genius—that is merely a sense of spiritual reality.

We wonder how a poet can have such an intimate practical knowledge of flora and fauna, or of the life of the sea. It is given to him spiritually. He absorbs it by a kind of sixth sense.

Women in harems, women in boudoirs, women sitting in the windows looking out, women knitting, women just sitting still, have in all ages been acquiring more spiritual freedom than men.

When men learn this, they have learned much.

It is never necessary to argue with a woman. If you have anything to say to her, think it.

Or if you have any sort of message or command for a woman, whatever it is, just give her the end of it in a word.

Women know how to handle men, not always or necessarily because they hold them sexually, but because they have, through long sittings, acquired more

unerring spiritual insight. We call it intuition. It is, in fact, only a rising above the conditions of carnal standardized thought.

All really great men have thus been attended by a number of women, who have directed them spiritually, while ostensibly attending to their physical wants. We shall ultimately rid ourselves of our false standards about sex.

The real trouble is that, because men fasten their own ideas of sex upon women, they think that a man cannot have an affinity with a woman unless he is sexually attached to her.

The fact is that the true union of the feminine and masculine elements rises far above sex, and if a man wishes to understand what this means, then let him clean out his mind, and he will find that he is reaping a new joy never before even suspected, in his association with all women.

Is it possible to explain how one can be active in the world, and particularly in the world of women, go among them, be charmed by them, be moved by them physically, and yet not mix up the two things?—for one is reality and the other unreality.

One must recall the saying of Christ when his disciples questioned him about the rich man entering heaven, and how he replied to their insistence, "With God all things are possible."

The great mistake made by the ascetics lies in repression. We overcome by uncovering.

Suppress a sex instinct, and you produce a criminal.

Free it, and, along with this, understand it, and it melts into a much larger horizon. Its ephemeral quality is instantly perceived.

There is a spiritual quality about all women which cannot be understood until this veil of sense and sex is removed. And when that is removed, one understands it.

Men who are nursed by women understand it.

Married men who have overcome their sensual instincts or practices enough so they can see the reality in their wives understand it.

If a man wishes to advance in spiritual thinking, then he can do no better than to learn from a woman.

The real obstacle to this advance lies right here: A man yields to a woman, allowing her to indulge herself in material things, merely for the sake of gratifying his own sensuality. Then, to cap the climax, he upbraids her for her extravagance.

If men search themselves truly, they will discover that this is almost invariably true.

Men love to display the women they either marry or keep. They treat their wives and mistresses precisely like sport-cars.

When, thus, a man is, as they say, ruined by a woman, he is actually ruined by himself.

Why is it, if this is the case, that women, who have more spiritual insight than men, allow it? Why do they yield to men in this manner?

Simply for the reason that, broadly and practically speaking, men and women are a great deal alike on the material plane.

The difference between them lies in the fact that while both yield equally to the temptation of indulgence in material things (allowing for difference in temperament), the woman will rise above material things more easily in an emergency. She will adapt herself to hardships more easily. Aside from whatever physical suffering they may endure, women are thus happier than men. There are of course spoiled women, women so saturated with selfishness that any withdrawal of their cherished material attachments makes them resort to anything to keep these attachments. But extreme cases exist in both sexes.

On the average, and allowing for exceptions, it will be found that women have a deeper insight than men, and therefore a man should study women for the purpose of learning his true direction.

A man can always trust to the disinterested love of a pure woman to carry him through.

He will also discover that, so far as indulging her is concerned, just as soon as he overcomes the habit of indulging himself, then her indulgence will cease in proportion.

Women are not superior to men. They divine more in a shorter time. They cut through the unessentials, and their judgment is more unerring.

The long line of ridicule, wit, satire, and even obscenity which man from the beginning has directed at woman has in reality been directed at himself. He is the target of his own shafts.

Men very rarely understand their real responsibility toward women. For instance, because of their passive mental state, too many women encourage themselves to become the repositories for scandal, disease thoughts, and so one. They gather in knots and talk about these evils, thus giving them permanence or a kind of reality. Do not be deceived. Beneath the surface of this poisonous covering there are deep spiritual realities in women, even the lightest of them. Women are too often hypnotized or mesmerized by the evil thought of the world at large. Men should come to understand this, and, instead of ridiculing this weakness in women, should refuse to countenance it.

Women themselves are coming to recognize this defect and are overcoming it. This is because they are

becoming more self-reliant, more practical, more self-supporting. They are quick to see for themselves.

In conclusion:

If what I have written seems to be confused, that is to say, seems to be dealing with things opposite, it must not be overlooked that I am dealing with two sides of consciousness, the real and the unreal.

Physically, materially, men and women are much the same. Both float along in the dream life of illusion, subject to carnal influences. Women dress, and men ogle. Women entice, and men fall. Women gossip, and men scoff. Women yield too often to man's base passions, for the sake of temporary carnal dominion; and men pay women for doing this in their own carnal terms.

But brushing all this unreality aside, I am here concerned in the great living fact of our spiritual dominion alone. I am trying to show that back of this human screen God works. And also that we do not need to be AFRAID of this screen.

When we come to understand spiritual reality, we lose nothing at all of our sense of carnal things. On the contrary we understand them precisely for what they are worth. All women then come to have their beauty. Benedetto Croce has referred to the fact that he does not want to live with an angel, and that when we reduce our loved ones to angels we are robbing

them of what makes this life worth while. At least in so many words that is about what he means.

Alas, how difficult to make it clear to a perplexed man like this that once we rise to the sense of spiritual reality, instead of losing anything, we see with our human eyes, we gain everything!

We actually lose when we do not see spiritually.

For instance, I knew a charming woman who had attained a very high level of spiritual reality. She came to visit me once, and while we talked her husband sat and listened, not understanding a thing. She was very artistic, and when I visited her in her home, in turn, I was immensely thrilled at the artistic excellence she had achieved in her environment. She had made a long study of interior decoration, and the effect was very beautiful.

Now this woman, with a perfectly natural normal manner, had carried out in her material life her sense of spiritual beauty. In short, this house of hers was just a manifestation, and a very beautiful one, of her thought.

But what happened happens so often. No sooner had she finished the house and marked it perfect than she was taken away. Within less than a year her husband married another woman, and of course this second wife upset everything. Her own carnal personality naturally had to assert itself.

This, in some measure or other, is a commonplace of American married life. All of us know of instances where men permit these things.

But consider for a moment the problem. This man, and so many others, live side by side with women, much more advanced than they are in spiritual reality, and are totally blind to it, because their sensuality has obscured their spiritual senses.

These men are merely the victims of their own carnal natures.

If they could rise above their carnal natures into a sense of spiritual reality, what a different world it would be!

And what a difference it would make with the children.

In this instance the children went wrong—divorces *et cetera.* And people wondered why, with such a charming mother.

Dear, dear!

One of the great difficulties with married life in America, or anywhere else for that matter, is that the wives, when childless, have no REAL OCCUPATION.

A REAL OCCUPATION has two elements in it which are necessary. The first is fullness of activity, and the second is hope. Without hope human beings wilt. Some women find themselves in

church activities. But these are largely unsatisfying, because artificial.

What hope is there for a woman who has nothing to do which does not carry her beyond herself?

There are thousands of married women like that.

If a woman has children, and these children grow up, they leave her and strike out for themselves. She is thus often left high and dry. Her husband's occupation is probably not real or not one in which she can share.

Money in this instance does not satisfy. There is no hope in money. There is material security, nothing more.

Thousands of women have tried going into business. Or politics.

Wherever this kind of activity carries a woman beyond herself, gives her something to work for which is permanent, she has a real occupation. Otherwise not.

Also women who have no real occupation may be destroyed by alcohol, sex, gambling, or religion. Occasionally a woman is saved by her natural gift. Sarah Bernhardt's genius made her immune to evil. She was what might be called a sinnerless sinner.

CHAPTER XXXIV

KNOWLEDGE

I ASK myself now, and I also ask my readers, at this point, WHAT IS KNOWLEDGE?

And I reply immediately and unequivocally: It is KNOWING MYSELF.

Elsewhere I point out more particularly, and I here repeat, ALL OTHER KNOWLEDGE IS FALSE.

Thus I have known men who have devoted decades of time to the study of some mass of collected human facts, such as histories, for instance, THE SOURCE OF WHICH COULD HAVE BEEN ARRIVED AT BY ONE DAY'S MEDITATION.

We learn Truth, not by reading, not by research, not by any mind training, but by abandoning all of these methods and going back to the source.

And this source is indicated, often by one word, sometimes by two words, and scarcely ever by more than half a dozen words.

Within the whole vast collection of human knowledge in all languages, I do not suppose there are more than forty words that hold the key to Truth.

I have heard lectures on the Bible by men who knew apparently everything in it. They had read it and read it for years. They were graduates of seminaries. They had expounded it in classes. People who flocked to hear them were fascinated by their fluency and the extent of their Biblical culture.

Yet these men really knew nothing about the Bible.

There are men who have meditated on single words for years. To them, the idea that this truth is new would be highly amusing. And yet, as I look around me and see how far astray the majority of men are, it makes me feel as if this Truth ought to be shouted out over and over, even if it fall on dull ears.

That is what is the matter with the great majority. They have the wrong end first. They seek for true knowledge at the ends of the branches instead of digging in at the roots.

Every group of thinkers in the world believes it has a monopoly in intelligence. The great artist looks at the world from the point of view of his own masterpiece, and regards the mob as an inert mass. So the others—philosopher, theologian, musician, writer. These groups manifest their own accumulation of facts, as they have accumulated these facts by conventional study, and this very process narrows them down to the limitations of their own field,

and, by a kind of paradox, invests with them the conceit, the strut, which is always present with any sort of limitation; for to be unlimited is to realize one's own nothingness in the human scheme.

Now if, from the vantage-ground of our single syllable, be it OM, TAO, GOD, or MAN, we survey these various groups, each with its individual pecularities, we may well ask ourselves, WHAT IS REAL INTELLIGENCE?

I shall answer this question in the following manner:

If, in my contact with and observation of other human beings, both young and old, I make comparisons (on the material plane), I notice that one man is very quick-witted and another very slow-witted. Among five boys, four will be slow at their studies, and the fifth will be extraordinary. Close observation of this boy will reveal traits showing how he accumulates knowledge. He will have enthusiasm, persistence, and an enormous curiosity which seems to carry him off his feet. His parents have to restrain him for otherwise they are afraid he may wreck himself physically. This boy eventually grows up and becomes a great student, very likely attaining eminence. The other four boys will plod along, and each eventually will achieve some sort of success. But a sixth boy, hitherto unmentioned, may be touched with gen-

ius. He may have what we term a gift. This boy may be wayward, he may be wild, the despair of everybody until suddenly, later on, he is recognized as a genius.

Now these various kinds of intelligence may be termed natural intelligence in its various degrees. They represent the combinations of human heredity, environment, and education, and also the home life and so on.

But REAL INTELLIGENCE is something which envelops all of these. REAL INTELLIGENCE comprehends all things. REAL INTELLIGENCE, as nearly as I can describe it, is what Solomon called UNDERSTANDING.

And it is universal. By this I mean that it may be held by anybody, irrespective of human training or education. Women seem to have it intuitively more than men. It is communicable on any plane. Those who have it understand one another intuitively. It is essentially a SPIRITUAL BROTHERHOOD. Actually it is the recognition, by our own REAL SELVES, of the REAL SELVES in others.

It is also a kind of instant thing.

You may see the REAL SELF in another, and he may not know that you see it. He may be merely the outward product of education to the extent that his REAL SELF is obscured. Thus I have talked

with scholars for a period until suddenly they revealed their REAL SELVES. I have met negroes who have instantly communicated to me their real selves.

If we go back into the history of primitive man, we shall find that this REAL INTELLIGENCE pervades the most primitive literature; in especial, the Vedic Hymns are reeking with it. The American Indian revealed it. It is a common possession of all peoples, but it is very much obscured in many cases by animalism. Nevertheless I am inclined to believe that it is in purer form among the simplest and most primitive groups. The shepherds of Palestine developed it to the extreme, which enabled them to give us the purest form of spiritual revelation which we have. But even here it was necessary for them to employ symbolism. Any who care to look over Swedenborg, even though they may not be willing to accept his findings, will see what this means, especially in his "Arcana Cœlestia."

The measure of REAL INTELLIGENCE which we may have will by so much reveal to us the REALITY in all religions as distinct from the unreality. Thus, by a sort of spiritual intuition, we can separate Truth from its setting of tradition, hypocrisy, formalism, utilitarianism. No men are really bad. Behind their masks we can discern the reality.

CHAPTER XXXV

POWER

SPIRITUAL power comes through material failure. It develops slowly through the evidence that accumulates against the world of sensation. It was precisely this truth which was not understood by the great Nietzsche. He beheld the phenomenon of Christianity, and because it was built up by man out of what he defined as the revenge of the weak against the strong, he gave it false reality. It is never safe to pass judgment on any part of the created world. No criticism is valid carried to its conclusion and to the exclusion of all other factors. Nietzsche's superman thus becomes a kind of morbid specter. He lacked humility. He repudiated the world of tradition, denouncing it with the passion of a genius which refused to compromise. But he could not, or would not, replace it by planting the seeds of a spiritual growth which would have given him true understanding. It was this incapacity to make the transfer from the material to the spiritual which finally drove him mad. Out of his enormous sufferings (illusions) there grew the reverse of his intention. The reverse

is always the result. There can be no failure in any direction without an accretion of power. The very illusion of failure is the protective coloring necessary to make the power flow through one. Nietzsche developed enormous power. His work lives. But his failure to get beyond a certain point makes him one of the most pathetic figures in the world.

We have no real power through the senses.[1] When

[1] A man has power. He can burn, kill, imprison his fellow-men and take away their property. A simple-minded person naturally reasons thus: "Since that man has this power, he must be a very great man. He must possess mighty strength and vast ability that have enabled him to acquire this power." In spite of the patent fact that power is always obtained by inheritance, intrigue, or luck, this reasoning is so natural that not only men of little intellect and learning, but even men of experience and education, easily fall into this error. This is particularly true when the way in which power has been seized is more or less concealed, when power has been gained, not through two or three events evidently governed by chance, but by a whole series of lucky accidents that complicate the process to the observer. . . .

In saying this I do not mean to assert that accession to power never implies merit. I merely urge my reader not to fall into the vulgar error of supposing that because a man rules his fellow-men he is endowed with some inherent quality, like great strength of character, superior intelligence, genius, or moral grandeur, that gives him this power. I merely ask my reader to recall that power is one of the most mysterious of phenomena, which a poet has described as coming from the gods, and that possession of power and personal worth are two utterly distinct and independent things. One does not proceed from the other, and no necessary connection exists between the two. Great men lose power; worthless men gain and preserve it. I merely ask my readers to bear in mind that all is not gold that glitters. This first fallacy is a fallacy of logic.

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we examine as critically and honestly as we can the process by which we accomplish anything, we gradually come to see what for present purposes may be termed the outside; although this is an illusion, for the whole process must of necessity be internal. Or subjective. Our education, which at first sight seems to have been something implanted in us by our former teachers, is thus seen to be only that which has grown up inside of us and which supplies us with certain devices to help us maintain ourselves in the sense world. Even the very stimulus or urge, which compels us to take action in any instance, is itself something which acts apparently from the outside as a spur upon our ambition or our sense of self-preservation. Yet this urge actually rises up from the inner springs of our Being. But it seems at first view to take on many designs. This diversity of intention, however, is only apparent superficially. When we probe deeper we begin to see ourselves in a very different light.

So far as these various urgings or cravings are concerned, we may easily group them into physical and mental. Our hunger for food is not something which we have created. In normal circumstances we give it no thought; that is, we do not work up any hunger for food through our imagination. The hunger slowly rises up out of the mist which covers the

intensity of our activities and impels us to the physical act of eating. But if, in addition to this simple animal urge, we add another urge which stimulates our imagination, we take on the atmosphere of the epicure or gourmand, and the stimulus thus acting upon our consciousness is therefore a more complicated affair. Definite physical results may come from two causes or sources: from a source which appears to us universal (hunger in general), or from a source which appears individual (our personal imagination).

So it is with all the motives on the material plane which impel us to take any action. It requires a very careful and judicial investigation to separate them as far as possible into their various strains. Indeed it is probable that this process of separation, division, and segregation, if carried to a finality, would be precisely similar to that which scientists follow in their endeavor to trace the source of matter—until, apparently, they come to a standstill before the electron.

Let us now pause for a moment and recall the purpose we have; namely, to increase our power. We are conscious at certain moments of a sense of power. We are also conscious at certain other moments of the fact that power has failed us when we most needed it. Before we can discover the reasons for this alternate success and failure, however, it is necessary for us to know what power is. Power must be defined in

such a way that we shall come to understand it. And the moment we come thus to face and examine it, we are confronted by a startling fact: power is nothing.

"Life," declares Emerson, "is a search after power: and this is an element with which the world is so saturated—there is no chink or eerie in which it is not lodged—that no honest seeking goes unrewarded."

Here our most eminent thinker fails to make clear the fact that he is merely writing of the material results, and not of the source. We must not err on the other side, of course, and dismiss material results as of no consequence. But Emerson writes of power as though it were some kind of entity. What we see manifested on the material plane as the result of this seeming hidden power is in itself only another illusion—a dead end. A million dollars in the bank to the credit of one John Doe is thus a dead end. The money itself is not there. Yet those who pride themselves on the logic of their materialism always picture it as there. It is in John Doe's name, but it has no reality for him. True, if he wished to take an extraordinary amount of trouble, he might be able to cash it into a million hard dollars in gold. But what would he then do with his million? He could not eat it. It would soon exhaust and terrorize him carrying it about. On the whole, it is merely the outward manifestation of certain seeming combinations of

thought which, working within him, have enabled him to tag his name to the thing which we call a million.

We have all of us felt the spur of ambition urging us to do a certain thing. This thing in all probability is some form of action, some matter of skill, which, when we have finally mastered it, makes us successful in a certain direction—as a lawyer, doctor, author, or artist—or the owner of a million dollars in cash.

Now when we begin under the stimulus of this urge, it is highly probable that we experience at first a series of failures. We are learning. These failures cause us discomfort, and it may be asserted as a general rule that the extent of the discomfort is measured by the intensity of that initial urge. Every time a new failure is experienced, to be followed by a later success, the suffering increases proportionately. The man who slowly acquires a million is no exception. Material success of this kind, however, whether it be externalized in terms of money or of what we may call influence (political, scientific, business, intellectual), may seem to come easy. It may be a matter of temperament. There are natural money-makers who seem to accumulate it without effort. Indeed it may be said in a general way that what men do easiest they do best.

Yet the suffering of which I write is always attend-

ant, in some form or another, upon these gradations of material success. For one thing, the man is slowly getting nearer to death, that tragic stopper on all our material activities. Then again, as he grows in so-called power, which is only an illusion, the tendency is for him to become more powerless, for the material combinations he has built with so much toil and thought not only crumble but are the seeming cause of a thousand daily annoyances. His tortures are only controlled by his capacity to endure, which, as a kind of defensive measure, he has had to build up along with his material success. The agonies of these material ascents are often quite horrible. Even to look back upon them afterward causes us to shudder. And here we must prepare ourselves for another shock; for the very endurance so extolled in great men is now seen to be something in which we have no part. In other words, we keep on enduring, not because of any will or resolution or creative original designs on our part, but because we cannot help it. We are impelled to endure for some unknown reason we cannot fathom; furthermore our endurance is static, not dynamic. Actually we do nothing. We fall back on our original soul. We have been previously anchored to this idea of carrying on. Circumstances pitch themselves at us. All sorts of flotsam and jetsam float in on us. We want to break

away. We are weary of trying to do the same deadly thing over and over, but we cannot help ourselves. We curse ourselves for sticking, but the inevitable always arrives in the nick of time to save us from not doing the thing. We shrink and shrink and shrink, but like people operated upon, we have no choice. We are led up to the table, and the knife enters our vitals. After a while we begin to lose, perhaps imperceptibly, our sense of discomfort. We forget slowly how we have suffered in any given case, and experience the recurring and spasmodic elation which comes from the thing called success. We are honored. Confidence flows in upon us. We hold ourselves up. We have arrived once more. We feel the thing called power.

What has happened during this period of so-called development? Nothing indeed but an unconscious process of elimination. Man is the center of the universe. Floating by him, around him, constantly impinging upon him, are countless ever changing sensations. Man himself is unchanging. What happens is that he gradually frees himself from the burdens of material existence. He takes up, like a child in a nursery playing with a mechanical toy, one thing after another that he can wind, and then tosses it aside with the sinking realization that it gets him nowhere. Therefore instead of taking in, as he seems to do,

he casts out, all along the line of material life. In so far as he is freed, does he display what we term power. In proportion as his fear decreases, his power increases. Matter and sensation are both illusions.

Some of the greatest masterpieces created by man have been created during periods of failure. Alone, unknown, men have put forth those masterpieces. They have often died without acknowledgment. That is of no consequence, because at the moment such acknowledgment could come only from a world of illusion. A masterpiece is distinguished from other spurious forms of art by one thing: permanence. The world revolves around it, but it never changes. It is always a masterpiece. The dialogues of Plato, the Hermes of Praxiteles, are as fresh to-day as ever. If it be asked how, in a world of illusion, a masterpiece can ever be recognized, the answer is that beneath the surfaces of material humanity are mystical elements which constitute a court of last resort. What we see is fleeting. What we feel is permanent. The invisible.

That which gives us the thing we call power is the golden gift to discriminate between the fleeting and the permanent. In literature we extol restraint in any author. It is what he omits which moves us. The same is true in art. What he gives is only symbolic

of the unknown whole. It is never necessary to tell the truth. It is only necessary to indicate it. Power is repose.

Power is the perfection of passivity. It is doing nothing persistently. To achieve it seems to require an original decision. Apparently we must make up our minds to remain still.

Yet if you will pause for a moment to probe the source from which has come your sense of power in any field, you will see at once that there was never a moment of deliberate decision. You took no step. What happened was that you resisted certain things which bore down upon you. You conquered them, not because of any initiative, but because if you had not they would have conquered you. You endured. You stood pat. The whole affair, from start to finish, was none of your choosing. Power therefore is merely an involuntary withholding from action. We are powerful in so far as we are permanent, and we are permanent in so far as we are passive. All things must revolve around a common center.

How then is it possible to achieve power? Only by the realization of its nothingness.

And this realization?

It is the outcome of an attempt on your part to resist certain things which threaten to overwhelm you. It is a defensive measure.

Life, that mysterious flood of chaos, has rolled in upon you and broken your childish peace. You resist it in the only way—by learning how to be still.

And that is power.

CHAPTER XXXVI

SPIRITUAL INSIGHT

THAT we should go on investigating the world of nature, sorting it out, and increasing our material stock of facts about it, is in itself an admirable quest. Man's material activity is his crowning glory. Take away from me my work, and I perish. We can acknowledge this, nay, more, we can emphasize this in every way, without detracting from the force of the True Spiritual Reality in which our REAL SELVES grow. If we live in the world and yet are not of it, we are then living truly. The spiritual occupation which we set for ourselves reanimates and glorifies everything we do materially. The main reason why, even in our changing points of view, we gain so much, is because we are no longer afraid. We are not afraid to lose anything that this world gives us, because we know its valuelessness. The mere fact that we know this enables us to hold dominion over the things of this world in proportion as we advance in spiritual insight.

And in the sense I am writing of, this spiritual in-

sight is not a mystery. It does not deal with things beyond the senses in what some regard as a weird and wholly impossible manner. There is absolutely nothing beyond the senses which the senses can in any way understand. It is precisely this faith in what—from the sense point of view—we can never know, that gives it its intense reality.

To sum up: let me now link this thought with the Approach to the Spiritual Life. Previously I have written of the process of self-searching. Now in connection with self-searching, through which we gradually uproot and detach ourselves from our "possessions," we learn how this can be done; namely, by meditating on key words.

Just as it may take days or weeks or months to develop a real spiritual understanding of the Lord's Prayer, so, as key words come up before the mind's eye, meditate upon them, look up references to them, get behind them, look into their root history until you will see their real spiritual significance. The study of the Bible will thus become a source of everlasting progress. Have you, for example, ever meditated upon the word "perfection"? Have you thought about Zion the city of perfection? Do you know that this is a state of the soul?—and not a material city. If not, how can this understanding be arrived at? I repeat, by giving up your possession of the material

concept of a city. Use the material conception in order to bring into reality your spiritual vision of a state of perfection and beauty. Thus you hold dominion spiritually over the material conception of city, while at the same time you realize Truth. If you think this is difficult, try it and you will find it is very easy, once you yield up your mortal sense of things.

Remember that all material things were once visions in the mind of some one. They are externalized forms of thought. Reverse this. From your key word, which will bring up the externalized form, trace this back to the spiritual source.

If you thus think of the word MAN, you think of a man, you see a man. Visualize thus a perfect man, as perfect as you can see in your mind's eye. Do you not now understand that this perfect man comprehends all things? Suppose the Greek sculptors, instead of thinking thus of a perfect man, had thought of a man diseased, crippled, half-witted—what then would the Hermes of Praxiteles have been? This masterpiece is a masterpiece only because first the artist had a vision. Do you therefore cultivate your visions. Cast out imperfections. Visualize only perfections.

You ought to do this anyway, because your own mortal life is brief. We have no real right to obtrude

our own temporal thoughts upon our fellows. These temporal thoughts, like the mortal man in the Psalms, are here to-day and gone to-morrow. We ought to visualize something permanent, because by thus doing we are adding to the perfect thought of the world.

That is why I dislike the thought of all critics. They are not adding anything; they are taking away.

By thinking thus of MAN, the spiritual man gradually comes out.

Extend this thought, if you like, to two other words, namely, FATHER and SON, as I have already tried to make plain this mystical relationship. Maybe you are a father yourself. If so meditate upon these two words. Consider that they comprehend the spiritual relationship between every father and every son. Do you doubt this mystical relationship? You do not, if you are a real father.

CHAPTER XXXVII

A COURSE OF READING

Not only is the individual supreme, but he must always hold dominion over any material thing. And this includes his reading. The tendency to lean upon any writer, or upon any book, must be sternly repressed.

The moment we allow ourselves to be submerged in any atmosphere, we limit ourselves by so much. This should always be kept in mind.

It is also necessary to remember that any set method or system is an indication of lack of faith. It is placing one's reliance on law, that is to say, on human means, and should be sternly resisted. Not only are we directed, but the direction is unfailing and absolute. When we succeed in casting off all method and just go along from hour to hour and from day to day, we put ourselves in the way to accomplish all things.

We must, however, understand quite clearly that a very large part of our progress in spiritual matters comes through the printed word. Without in any

way attempting to advise the reader, or to force him into any groove, I intend here to give the result of my own experience, this being in the way of suggestion rather than direct steering.

Is any reading necessary?

Only so far as it is felt to be so.

It is perfectly useless to read the Bible by rote. One should read it solely in response to a demand of the soul. If that demand is not felt, the Bible should not be read.

To learn the Bible by heart, or any part of it, is thus unnecessary. The only object of our reading at all is to draw us closer to God. It is to give us the increased understanding which will enable us to rise into the spiritual realm. It is only through faith, wisdom, and understanding that we can know God at all. Knowledge does not come through books, except when we are open to receive it. We learn truth by meditation, by experience, by suffering, and also by joy, not by any mental process. Words mean nothing, or mean everything, to us, in accordance with our attitude at the time of visioning them.

I believe that this is what one ought always to do; I mean, to focus on one thing. I found that every time I read the Gospel of John over again, I got something new out of it. I found that there was a great advantage in thus anchoring myself to one short

spiritual message, because the effect was gyroscopic. No matter where I strayed, I always came back to the first chapter of John.[1]

I began this book with the insistence that upon faith alone could we come to see our way clearly. In conclusion, I now turn again to this foundation-stone of faith. By faith, to repeat, I mean an absolute reliance upon God, in such a manner that we feel we are directed by God; that is, under constant guidance. This means that *we ourselves must carry out* what we are directed to do, to the minutest detail, and it means nothing more. We then have quite enough to do. Indeed there is no time for anything else.

Many people say, "I have no time to read." My answer invariably is, "Then don't."

It is not, I repeat, necessary to read in order to learn.

The only real knowledge, the only real wisdom,

[1] I take the following story from the life of St. Pambo, AB. (S. Baring Gould, "Lives of Saints," vol. 7):

"Not being learned in letters, Pambo sought a man who could read to teach him the Psalter. His friend began with the first verse of the 39th Psalm. 'I said I will take heed to my ways, that I offend not with my tongue.'

"'That will do for to-day,' said Pambo, and went his way. He did not return for six months, and was chidden.

"'It is hard to learn that one verse,' answered Pambo: 'I have not mastered it yet.' Many years after someone asked him about that verse. 'It has taken me nineteen years to learn it and I am not perfect at it yet,' he replied."

the only real truth, comes from God, through turning to him spiritually.

From this attitude, of not trying to force one's self to do anything, naturally follow enormous activities. One does everything.

Likewise it is true that, without any plan, plans or habits do develop. One begins unconsciously to fall into step with God. We are guided a great deal by God's seeming to thwart us in our efforts. For example, during many years I constantly adopted systems of reading, only to find that they would not work. But out of all this trial and error I discovered that I had fallen into certain automatic reading, just as one breathes without knowing it.

This was in response to a recognized need.

When I read the New Testament exclusively, I found that questions were constantly coming to me about the Old Testament. Similarly, when I read nothing, I found that the need arose to read. From all this came the habit of reading one chapter of the Old Testament, one chapter of the New, one chapter from a Gospel, and one chapter from an epistle. I got a cheap Bible, one that I could mark with impunity, and at the end of each chapter, when I had finished it, I put the date. I did not adopt this as a plan to be carried out every day. I gradually came to it, and if I skipped a day or a week it did not mat-

ter, I refused to take on any responsibility. The result has proved that I have been extraordinarily regular.

I do not believe that any one can read more than a chapter of the Bible at one sitting and get the most out of it. Indeed one chapter can be studied almost indefinitely.

Another thing is to get a small list of books and have them always where one can get at them—morning, noon, and night. I have tried and tested out these books. I find them, over the lapse of years, complete for my real needs. I am going to give them here. I do not offer them as a course of reading for any one else. They are what I term companion books. Some of them I may not touch for months. Then again I may do nothing else but read them all for a week—day and night.

A small Oxford Bible (size, 4 by 6¼ inches) without any marginal references and printed in minion type. This, as stated, I have marked up, and it contains a complete record of my chronological reading over a period of fifteen years. It cost originally $3.

The "Vest Pocket Edition of the Bible" (No. 245) in 31 volumes issued by the American Bible Society. These little volumes, as their name implies, are 2¾ by 3½ inches. They contain nothing but the bare text of each Bible book. A cover comes with them.

I don't think I paid more than $2.85 for the whole set originally. I have found them simply invaluable for reading on trains, as they look like memorandum-books and attract no attention. It may seem singular to say so, but I have discovered it a dangerous practice to be seen reading a Bible in public. Several times I have been approached by religious cranks. And there is no more disconcerting experience than to be approached on a train by a religious crank, except, as some one has stated, to be converted by a boy evangelist. These little books make one immune.

The "Teacher's S. S. Edition of the Bible" (Oxford), containing the books called Apocrypha, with marginal references and a concordance, maps, etc. This (bound in morocco) cost me originally $11, and I have found it invaluable. In size it is 4¾ by 7 inches, and for reading in bed it is easily handled (King James).

The "Companion Bible." (Oxford.) This contains the authorized version (King James) and is one of the most extraordinary books I have ever seen. It has an intricate system of cross-references, is anonymously compiled from the fundamentalist point of view, and has a series of appendices in the back that fairly reek with all kinds of observations and learning. It is a very large book, however, about 7 by 10 inches, containing well over 200 pages, and

cost about $22. For straight reading it is impossible, but for browsing in and digging about in, it is wonderful.

The "Analytical Reference Bible" (Wilmore's). (Funk & Wagnalls.) This Bible (King James) is even larger than the Companion Bible, but it has a subject-index which enables one to turn to the section of texts and find these texts all grouped under one heading. For instance, if you want to find all about what the Bible says of sorrow, there it is all together. Then again it has a concordance and maps and a great deal of other information. A very remarkable and useful book of reference.

The "Century Bible." (Oxford.) This is the revised text and is published in 34 volumes, each 4 by 6¼ inches. The volumes cost about $1.25 each. This is a variorum edition; that is, with voluminous notes by the various editors. These books can be purchased singly, and for study of the text and for interpretation of it they are superb. In ten years' time I have never read but four of these volumes, but I keep them on hand when I want to look up some question about the text.

The "Scofield Reference Bible." (Oxford.) This Bible comes in various sizes (King James). The editor, the Rev. C. I. Scofield, devoted a great many years to getting it up, and it has a system of connected

topical references and other features which I have found invaluable.

Young's "Analytical Concordance to the Bible." (Funk & Wagnalls.) This is the largest and heaviest book of all, about the size of Webster's Unabridged Dictionary, and contains a complete concordance to every word with the Greek and Hebrew meanings. It is indispensable.

Hastings's "Dictionary of the Bible," complete in one volume printed on India paper. Also invaluable. It costs about $8. It is an abbreviated edition of Hastings's larger work but is complete enough for all ordinary purposes.

"A New New-Testament," interlinear with lexicon synonyms with the authorized version to which is added a new Greek-English new Testament lexicon. A great help as a guide to the Greek text.

Peake's "Commentary." (Nelson.) Contains about 100 pages, size about 6½ by 9½ inches. Cost less than $5. An invaluable work, which I have always near, but the index is not so good as it should be.

Common Prayer and Hymnal. This book (or the two volumes) is of course the official ritual-book of the Anglican Church, in which I have been brought up, and is therefore dear to me personally. But nevertheless, as a compendium of religious truth (barring

some unfortunate references to a cruel God which bid fair to be eliminated in time), I know of no better companion. And this is true for every one. (I have very near me many Roman Catholic books, many Jewish books, many Indian and Chinese books which I read constantly. I see no reason therefore why I should not extol the Book of Common Prayer as a companion to everybody.) Particularly, I have found that the collects and the hymns (a few of them) are sources of great spiritual power. Another little book I am glad to mention is Clarke's "Scripture Promises," a small collection of grouped scripture texts, now still being widely read after three generations.

It goes without saying that in the list given above I have scarcely scratched the surface of Biblical literature. But I am here concerned in giving the reader the shortest possible list of books and Bibles which will be found necessary as companion books.

I omit any reference to modern translations, of which there are six or seven, except to say that among them Moffat is perhaps the best, although Weymouth's translation of the New Testament offers important help in the text. The Oxford Press publishes a Greek-English testament which is very valuable.

As for more general reading, the literature of the

subject is so vast that I can give only a very few fundamental books, which I have tested and know their worth. The question resolves itself into this: If, in the shortest time, I wished to gain a fairly complete knowledge of religious thought, combined with spiritual guidance, what books would I read?—And this aside from Bible-reading already given.

First, I should read Thucydides's "History of the Peloponnesian War," translated by either Crawley or Jowett. The former is published in Dent's Classical Library in two small volumes. Along with this I should get a copy of Shepherd's "Historical Atlas." This volume indeed should never be beyond one's elbow. The reason I give Thucydides first is because his book is not only the best history ever written, but it gives a perfect picture and analysis of human nature governed only by material and nationally selfish purposes. It is a free exposition of the pagan intellectual mind at its height. But in connection with this I should read Plato's Dialogues, especially the Apology of Socrates and the Phædo. The reading of these two Greek authors will be a fine foundation for a solid knowledge of the human consciousness. In addition, if one cares to, Plutarch's lives of Nicias, Pericles, Themistocles, and Alcibiades will be of great use. Then there is Grote, and, following this Greek line, the second volume of Gibbon's Rome

should be read. A working knowledge of Greek and Hebrew history and literature are desirable.

Now for the history of religion, pure and simple; there are three books. The first and most useful for busy people is "The World's Living Religions," by Robert Ernest Hume, a wonderful little volume containing all the formal information, and also a valuable bibliography. Next to this "The Historical Development of Christianity," by Oscar L. Joseph, is almost equally good. A much larger work, in five heavy volumes, is "The Outline of Christianity," a symposium by a number of writers. This monumental work is fascinating reading for one who has time. I can thoroughly recommend it.

Along with these books, there is one more modern writer who deserves notice. This is Count Keyserling, whose "Travel Diary of a Philosopher," while over-long and somewhat garrulous, is a very remarkable and extremely valuable exposition of a mind groping for light among all the religions of the world.

As for lives of Jesus, there are of course any number. Two which should be read in strong contrast are Renan's Life and Headlam's, the first representing the skeptical point of view, the second the Anglican. A more minute and on the whole scholarly book is "The Life and Times of Jesus," in two volumes, by Eldershein—a mine of scholarly research.

More charming as a lighter book, full of fine writing and atmosphere, is Dawson's "The Man Jesus."

In connection with these lives it is well to read that classic book, "The Historical Geography of the Holy Land," by George Adam Smith. While somewhat antiquated by later discoveries, it still remains a masterpiece. As for detailed information about Palestine, "The New Archæological Discoveries," by Coburn, contains a vast lot of material. Also "Here and There among the Papyri," by George Milligan.

If one wishes to read up on mysticism, the works of Evelyn Underhill will reveal a fine lot of material. Perhaps the best is "Mysticism," which also contains a complete bibliography of the subject. Her shorter volume is "Essentials of Mysticism." Dean W. R. Inge has written perhaps more scholarly works, his book on Plotinus and his Christian Mysticism" being the best. Among American writers, Rufus M. Jones in his "Studies in Mystical Religion" has written a thoroughly delightful work. I think he is perhaps the best writer in America on religion.

So far as companion books are concerned, and by this I mean books that help one day by day, there are the "Flowers" of St. Francis, "The Way of Perfection" by St. Theresa, "Augustine's Confessions," "The Heliotropium" of Drexelius, and "The Spiritual Exercises" of St. Ignatius, all Catholic mystics, who

seem on the whole to have contributed most to the literature of mysticism. They are all helpful, depending however on one's temperament. I cannot but feel that they do not represent the joy of the human soul, as this joy is I think coming now to be more fully understood. Swedenborg's works are voluminous and important. In connection with them ("Heaven and Hell" is a good one to begin with) should be read his life, which is issued by the Swedenborg Publishing Society. Harry Emerson Fosdick's book on Prayer is a fine helpful little book. Among the best if not the best of all the modern short books on spiritual development is James Allen's "As a Man Thinketh." This little book (the author is deceased) is published in innumerable editions and can be bought for fifteen cents. It has always struck me as rather a satire on the boasted intellect that so many books like this one of Allen's (for instance Trine's "In Tune with the Infinite," Judge Troward's works, and many others) should remain "unrecognized" by formal academicians, when in many respects they are more profound and certainly more practical and helpful than the professorial products. In the beginning of this book I laid about a little against the get-rich-quick spiritual hawksters. I am now therefore all the more willing to emphasize the enormous leverage of many books which have received no for-

mal recognition by scholars. There is a book, "Studies in Character," by Carol Norton, which is an example. In William James's "Varieties of Religious Experience" is a great mass of religious confessional material which I have found very illuminating. As for Mrs. Eddy's books—anathema to so many orthodox people—I think that perhaps her "Unity of Good" is her best utterance in a short space. But over the lapse of years on the whole I find that the essays of Ralph Waldo Emerson are the surest and best guide.

To go back to the mystics for the moment, there is Thomas à Kempis and the author of "The Cloud of Unknowing"; also "The Dark Night of the Soul," by St. John of the Cross. And what greater work, revealing the depths of the mystic journey of the soul, could there be than "Pilgrim's Progress"? It must be borne in mind that these books I have so briefly mentioned need to be read and reread constantly. It may easily happen that a single sentence, which at the first reading has no meaning at all, later on, in a different mood, fairly lifts one into the skies.

And poetry! For years my constant companion has been "The Oxford Book of Mystical Verse." This book, and Wordsworth's "Prelude," should never be far away. Few people understand the real benefit to be derived from the reading of poetry. If one

is not accustomed to it, it may be difficult. Wordsworth's "Prelude" is a constantly ascending spiritual joy.

Then there is a group of books, the wisdom of the Hindus, Egyptians, Chinese, and Hebrews; they are full of fine material.

And so I leave those of you who have had the courage and persistence to bear with me to this parting. I leave you to your reflections, your meditations, your prayers, and the infinitely kind God, universal, perfect, unknowable here, who—though you may not always believe it—guides us all unfailingly on our devious ways.

NOTES

Despair. Under the title of "The Popularity of Despair" a writer in the "Manchester Guardian" says: "A really good wallow in despair, for oneself or better still, for the world, has always been one of the choicest of refined pleasures. . . . The layman, while he reads and trembles, clings to the hope that the prophets may not have got hold of the whole of the facts. Perhaps Nebuchadnezzar did the same up to the last possible moment. . . . It meets the human need when Burns celebrated in describing the satisfaction given to Ayreshire congregations when

> " 'Mudie speels the holy stair
> Wi' tidings of damnation,'

and R. L. Stevenson when he described 'the rapture of the Scotsman returned from abroad at getting back to a good bracing kirk where things were put straight: "We were a' damned, an' that was clear." ' " Tolstoi sounds a deeper note when he writes: "Men are born, grow up, and live happy or sad lives; they are eager, industrious, and hopeful; they get what they want, and desire still more; or they lose things they crave and seek to recover them. They labor, suffer, die, are buried, and vanish from the earth, and even from the memory of their survivors, as if they never existed. And though they know the suffering, the death, and the oblivion that inevitably await them, they keep on doing the same things over and over again." In this country we have

a representative note of pessimism in the book of Kirsopp Lake ("The Religion of Yesterday"): "Almost against my will I have been unable to disguise my fear lest the churches leave their intellectual house-cleaning too late so that the generation now growing up will turn its back on all organized forms of Christianity. . . . I am daily more and more convinced that this may happen and words cannot express my regret." Affable Hawk in the "Spectator" quotes with solemn glee from a petition addressed to Queen Elizabeth by a seaman:

"The wings of a man's life are plumed with the feathers of death."

The true value of despair is undoubtedly great, because it leads one to a kind of desperate thought, and this in turn gives one increased understanding. Without despair, we should not really know what hope means. And from despair we rebound to the optimism which enables us to build once more our house without hands. "For my part," once wrote Moses Mendelssohn, "I content myself with the conviction that I shall always remain under Divine protection: that a holy and just Providence rules in the future world as it does in this, and that my true happiness consists in the beauty and perfection of my soul." This sounds now almost trite, in view of the offensive cheer-leader style of utterance so common to-day. For a practical kind of optimism however, I commend the following FIVE RULES of E. B. Pusey:

"Allow thyself to complain of nothing, not even of the weather.

"Never picture thyself to thyself under any circumstances in which thou art not.

"Never compare thine own lot with that of another.

"Never allow thyself to dwell on the wish that this or that had been, or were, otherwise than it was, or is. God Almighty loves thee better and more wisely than thou dost thyself.

"Never dwell on the morrow. Remember that it is God's not thine. The heaviest part of sorrow often is to look forward to it. 'The Lord will provide.' "

And to conclude, let me repeat a sentence from Sir Jacob Astley's Prayer before the Battle of Newbury (1644):

"Lord, I shall be verie busie this day. I may forget thee. . . . But doe not Thou forget me."

A Course in Mysticism. My contact with thousands of people in all walks of life has convinced me that mysticism is a closed book to the majority. Intensely religious people place themselves almost immediately under guidance and authority; that is, they join a church and accept its teachings without question. Skeptics sometimes look into the subject enough to confirm their previous opinion that it is not true. On the other hand, a small body of people, who seem to be growing constantly larger, follow the subject with great intensity. The continuous stream of literature bearing upon it is evidence of this. The objection to mystical intuition that it is false is thus met by Edward Ingram Watkin ("The Philosophy of Mysticism"): "If the objector means by this that no man has ever had any such experience, and that all those who claim it are liars, he is like a blind man who should affirm that all those who claim vision are liars. As well should the inartistic man deny that the artist perceives the beauty and significance that to him are wholly perceptible." Mysticism may be defined as the union of the soul with God. "There is a state of mind," writes William James

("Varieties of Religious Experience"), "known to religious men, but to no others, in which the will to assert ourselves and hold our own has been displaced by a willingness to close our mouths and be as nothing in the floods and waterspouts of God." James H. Leuba in "Psychology of Religious Mysticism" writes: "The distinction of the mystics is to have found and practised a way of realizing the divine Presence with as much, if not more, intensity than is actually present to the external sense." Mysticism, without question, is closely related to art, and its followers make up in intensity for their rareness; yet even here I shall have to qualify my opening statement, for it is highly probable that there are more mystics that can be known. If the reader has no previous knowledge of the subject and wishes to be informed, I know of nothing which better will lift one up to the loftiest sense of God's immediate presence. In this case, I suggest first that you read Graham Wallas's "Art of Thought." This book is not a mystical book, but one which deals simply with practical psychology, and it will give you a good start as a kind of handbook of your own consciousness. Follow it with Professor James's "Varieties," which fairly covers the whole field. Then, for English Anglican writers, read Dean Inge's "Plotinus" and "Christian Mysticism," following with Evelyn Underhill's "Essentials of Mysticism." If you wish to read the skeptical side, read Bertrand Russell's "Mysticism and Logic." For America the best books are those mentioned by Professor Leuba and James. But in addition you should read "Studies in Mystical Religion" by Rufus Jones. Practically speaking, all of the books mentioned are scholarly interpretations of the subject, and I warn you that they require careful study. If now, however,

you wish to enter into the life of the spirit through mysticism, that is to say, if you wish to avail yourself of the spiritual privileges offered by an entrance into the mystical life, then it will be necessary for you to read the mystics themselves. Perhaps there is no better introduction than to study the works of St. John of the Cross, in connection with Edward Ingram Watkin's "The Philosophy of Mysticism." This book, by a Roman Catholic, is written from his "conviction that Catholic dogma is not, as so many believe, a limit but an emancipation from limits." Here you will discover that mysticism has a definite technique, and you will of course come face to face with authority. In connection with it read "The Dark Night of the Soul" by St. John of the Cross, a work of transcendent beauty. Here you will meet with the question of direction, of quietism, and will perceive the distinction between the active and passive life and will also enter into the contemplative. If, in connection with these books, you care to take up Swedenborg, who was undoubtedly the greatest Protestant mystic, you will be introduced into an unseen world of spirits staggering in its overwhelming proportions. I warn you that it takes a strong purpose to embark upon these waters. "More difficult still," writes Drummond, "apparently, is the life of upward growth. Most men attempt it for a time, but growth is slow; and despair overtakes them when the goal is far away." Yet he could also write, "The well defined spiritual life is not only the highest life but is the most easily lived." The whole question lies largely in your own choice, (1) whether you will dismiss the whole affair and be of the world, worldly, (2) whether you will submit to authority and accept blindly what you have been taught to believe, (3)

whether you will resolve to go the way of the Pilgrim in his "Progress." It does seem rather combative, and indeed arrogant, that one should seemingly ignore all tradition and the accumulated power of Christian belief (as discordant as this appears on the surface). But all this is only apparent. You do not really ignore it. In the essential spirit of humility and obedience, you push on, and as you do so, it has been my experience that your Director comes. You are told what to do. Often you have to retrace your steps. But just when you despair the most, you are saved in the nick of time.

Progress. One of the greatest obstacles is that in a crisis we take the first remedy that offers itself, because of our fright or our despair. In these periods we are abnormally excited, we are "rattled." This condition is due to a lack of what may be called character. It is singular also that it occurs in its worst form in those who are outwardly calm—people of genuine culture. They have learned to repress their emotions, storing up volcanoes within. I recall taking luncheon with a friend of mine who committed suicide a few weeks after, and referring to the fact that he was at the time "the life of the party." . . . Speaking generally, however, those who are thus confronted by some debacle in their affairs too often take any kind of a remedy offered. And it is also generally true that the remedy is effective—temporarily. Thus any kind of testimonials are easily acquired. Morris Fishbein, M.D. in his interesting and informative book, "The Medical Follies," writes:

"If only the public knew that testimonials for almost anything can be bought in bundles of five thousand from New York firms that profit by their purchases from derelict pro-

moters of nostrums and by their sales to the exploiters of new devices, our possessors of fame and notoriety might hesitate to sell their letters of praise."

This of course applies particularly to those who frankly sell their testimonials, but the slightest observation must convince any one how gullible the average person in trouble becomes. Later, when the cure fails, we are all of us secretly humiliated, but our pride keeps us from acknowledging our error.

We are each one of us the sole arbiters of our own destinies, and only by making no compromises with any offered relief—which is invariably an internal affair—can we win out in the end.

"It is of course true," writes Dean Inge, in "The Religion of the Future," "that the claim to personal inspiration leads to great absurdities if we forget that the Spirit of God speaks in others also, and perhaps in a special sense to the church in a corporate capacity; but no vagaries of fanatical or unbalanced visionaries alter the fact that for the Protestant conscience and spiritual experience of the individual are the foundation of faith and morals."

The Confusion of Tongues. A writer in the "London Spectator," commenting upon a book by C. A. Broad, M.A., Litt.D., entitled "The Mind in Nature," remarks: "Dr. Broad makes what he admits a 'very startling statement' that on this subject there are exactly seventeen different theoretically possible types of metaphysical theory. These he proceeds to expound and examine." At about the same time this book was published another book entitled "Science, Religion and Reality" by Joseph Needham drew this comment from a writer in the "London Times": "It has been appar-

ent for some time past that science is passing through a stage of readjustment to the other great world-views, those of philosophy and religion. This readjustment is necessitated by the fact that the status of science is now radically different from what it was even twenty years ago. It is not too much to say that philosophy and religion are once more restored as the only methods we have of investigating the essential nature of reality." Havelock Ellis, in his "Dance of Life," quotes Mr. F. H. Bradley, one of the most influential of modern philosophers, who wrote at the outset of his career, "On all questions, if you push me far enough, at present, I end in doubt and perplexities," and still says forty years later that if asked to define his principles rigidly "I become puzzled." On medicine, Dr. Alexis Carrel in March, 1925, declared that "Modern medicine protects him [the individual] against infections which kill rapidly, but leaves him exposed to the slower and more cruel diseases and to brain deterioration." Bertrand Russell, one of Great Britain's leading mathematicians, writes in his "Mysticism and Logic": "Mathematics may be defined as the subject in which we never know what we are talking about, nor whether what we say is true." And in a long review (the "Nation") of Mr. Russell's writings, Sydney A. Reeve declares: "Professor Russell's articles upon 'The A B C of Relativity' should not go unanswered. Because of their title, they are leading so many to be ashamed of not being able to understand a thing so simple as to deserve the name of 'A B C,' that the fact that they are incomprehensible because they are sheer nonsense should be published." In his very able introduction to the book of Revelation (the "Century Bible"), the author (who is presumably G. Anderson

Scott, although this is not plain) goes on to state that at present there are three wholly divergent views of the book of Revelation, and enters into a long explanation with a list of authorities. He then states: "Each of these divergent views has its representative to-day; the 'futurist' having perhaps less support than either of the others, the continuous 'historical' still commending itself to the majority of English expositors, and the 'preterist' finding favor chiefly among the scholars of Germany." I give these examples, almost at random, to show at what straits any one must be put who, finding himself at sea upon the important problem of life and death, attempts to find any light among the "authorities."

Types of Mind. Having been during the early part of my life a journalist, I acquired the journalist's habit of falling readily into the mood of any one with whom I chanced to be associated. This habit followed me in my reading, so that, at first in rapid succession, I became carried away with the particular author I was with. When, later on, I tried to reconcile these divergent views, I was sadly put to it, and this brought me into complete doubt of myself. I was in turn converted to Buddhism, Taoism, and from thence became an atheist. Also, I was very strongly affected by ridicule, and particularly if the ridicule was well done, no matter how superficial the reasoning, it would invariably upset my notions of anything contrary I had previously held. It took me a long time to right myself from this curiously unstable condition, until finally I learned what I regarded and now regard as the truth by bitter experience. This truth, as my readers have I trust gathered, is simply that I myself am the sole judge of anything, and therefore I must work out my destiny as best I can with the help of God,

which I discover is unfailing. But while I was going through this transformation, it suddenly occurred to me that when I read any author who delighted me, it was not at all necessary to accept his conclusions on ultimate problems, but only to get as much pleasure as I could out of his type of mind. If you will thus divide humanity into types of mind and in each case take the highest one of each type, you will experience a new joy. These types may be roughly classified as Critical, Fanatical, Passionate, Creative (artistic), Legal, Literal, and Atypic—to which I myself belong. For instance I avoid reading criticisms as much as possible except by one or two of the best critics. I do not care a whoop for their opinions, but only for their style. The same thing is true of the legal mind, with which I have had considerable experience. This type of mind is generally uninteresting, yet the highest examples of it move me profoundly. I avoid fanatics and literal people as much as possible, and prefer not to meet creative people personally, but only to enjoy them at a distance. As for feminine minds, their intuitive qualities are a constant delight. Beyond this I rarely go. The worst as well as the most universal general type of mind is the one which is always jumping to conclusions, the one that is always telling you that it is bad to eat ice cream because it coagulates everything else. This is the mind that reads instantly into all other minds everything that others' minds never contain.

On Self-Righteousness. This is one of the most dangerous and subtle spiritual maladies, because it not only steals upon one unawares, but may actually rot out a large part of one's soul before its ravages are detected. Also, it is not confined to believers but is common to every type of mind.

The distinction must here immediately be noted between self-righteousness and self-confidence. Belief in one's self is, in its right form, merely a kind of moral courage which refuses to entertain any notion of failure. But self-righteousness, no matter whether it is shown in a critic or any otherwise respectable member of society, is the holier-than-thou attitude of mind in all of its gradations. It is particularly in evidence in churches, and indeed almost impossible to avoid. This is one of the reasons which kept me out of church, because I found that as soon as I entered into the "spirit of the thing" I was assuming that I was on a loftier plane than some others. It is but thinly concealed in the letter which Bishop Manning of the Diocese of New York wrote to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., in reply to the question asked him by Mr. Rockefeller whether the Cathedral of St. John the Divine (in view of the contributions made to the building of it by outsiders) should not be made an instrument of church unity. I quote only one sentence from Bishop Manning's letter as follows: "The time has, however, not yet arrived when the different churches can function in one organization, and any attempt prematurely to force such an arrangement would retard the cause of unity rather than to aid it." You see from this example that almost always the self-righteous man is right superficially in what he says, and wrong in his attitude. Imagine Christ writing in advance that he was willing to die for those people whom he had selected but not for everybody!

Speaking personally, the real difficulty with self-righteousness is that when, through some devastating spiritual experience, one mounts the heights and gets on good terms with God, one is then glorified with the sense of this presence;

but invariably, and generally swiftly following, one falls and falls hard. This sudden fall completely unnerves one and leaves him stark and Hagar-like, wandering in a wilderness of negation. Even here one does not have the sense to look back and see where the trouble began; for it was in the assumption, during the period of illumination, that one had at last discovered the secret of Melchizedek or of Noah who "walked with God." The fact is that there never is a time, no matter how free you seem from sin, when you are any better than you are at any other time. This has nothing to do with guilt; it is merely a condition. It is true of course that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, but that does not make the temple built of celestial material. If you rid yourself of the false idea that you are better at one moment than you are at another, then you will have no worse moments.

Religious Consciousness. In his highly valuable and scholarly little book, "Problems of the New Testament of To-Day," R. H. Malden brings out the important truth that if we wish to find God we can only do so through the main channel of religious consciousness, as it has been slowly built up in human experience. This channel doubtless is reddened with the blood of martyrs and is full of corruption; still the living stream flows on, and if we wish to drink of the waters of life we cannot stray off into the highways and byways. He writes, for one thing: "The historical facts of the Death and Resurrection of Christ are the only foundation upon which a Christian experience of any real value can rest. Divorced from them the pious fancy always wanders into unedifying paths. But the strength of the foundations is evinced by the solidity of the structures raised

upon them." No matter what church we may belong to, or whether we do not belong to any, but are trying to find the way, we must never forget this. So far as I know, practically all of the "cults" derive their sustenance from this great body of Christian tradition starting with the virgin birth. No matter how much we may dismiss the literal material history of the virgin birth and resurrection, we cannot dismiss the spiritual interpretation of it. We must believe that Christ rose. And it seems to me that the great difficulty with so many religious leaders and spiritual healers is that they are trying to exploit themselves. If we follow the line of those who have built up the religious consciousness, from St. Paul and Clement and Origen and so onward through the fathers and mystics, we shall find that in no case did they push themselves forward or attempt to establish any religion of their own, or if they did they fell by the wayside and have been forgotten. The one test of religious authority is whether the man or woman is a servant of God. Then again, while common people like ourselves do not find it necessary or expedient to become scholars, but get our spiritual understanding from our own experience, being thus drawn to partake of the living waters from the great stream (be it as I said, Romanist or Methodist), it does seem to be necessary for any so-called leader to become a student of sources. It does get on one's nerves a little when so many spiritual leaders, even when they have large followings, assert that their way is the only way, and claim to have made discoveries which have either been unconsciously absorbed from previous servants of the Lord, or else have been reassembled deliberately to catch the crowd. And in so many cases they have discovered something which is well worth

while, but are disbarred from doing permanent service, because they think they can make a greater profit in their sideshows than in the main tent.

The Idealist and the Materialist. That there are two opposite types of mind in the world and that all the problems of life hinge upon these opposites, is a commonplace in religion, science, and philosophy. The materialist type is best expressed by the utterance of Bertrand Russell, who said: "I believe that when I die I shall rot and nothing of my ego will survive. I am not young and love life. But I should scorn to shiver with terror at the thought of annihilation. Happiness is none the less true happiness because it must come to an end, nor do thought and love lose their value because they are not everlasting." Here is the way Havelock Ellis explains it ("Dance of Life"): "The fact in the first place, that the person with an over-developed religious sense necessarily conflicts with a person with whom the reverse state of affairs exists, cannot be doubted, nor is the reason obscure. It is difficult to conceive a Darwin and a St. Teresa entering with full and genuine sympathy into each other's point of view. And that is by no means because the two attitudes, stripped of all but their essentials are irreconcilable." And here in America, apparently we have these two divergent attitudes expressed by one man. Mr. E. W. Howe, known as the Kansas philosopher, and a homely writer of common sense, who without pretending to any marked scholarship thus writes in the "New York American": "I believe it is wise to accept a creed and belong to some orthodox church. A man who does this, and is modest about it, will avoid many of the inconveniences of life. . . . The trouble is that the advocates of Christianity expect

too much of it and its enemies abuse it more than is just." Then again in his own paper ("Howe's Monthly") he writes: "I wish I could be a Christian Scientist; they always seem so calm and to make the best of things. . . . I make the worst of things. . . . If I have anything on my mind, I can't sleep from thinking of it, and worry and waste time. I know better, but can't do better." This is almost what St. Paul said in the seventh chapter of Romans. And then, very close to this utterance, Mr. Howe, in reviewing a certain book called "Achievement," declares of the author: "He bases his philosophy too much on spiritual things (which do not exist) and not enough on material things (which do exist to the exclusion of everything else)." I have quoted from these various people representative statements which could be endlessly repeated from others, simply to show that it is all a question of terms. From the standpoint of this practical life, Mr. Howe is quite correct. Here nothing but material things have any existence. He does not believe in THERE because his HERE is the only thing he is aware of. So far as religion is concerned, he reverses the rule of Christ ("Render unto Cæsar") and declares that it is more expedient to go to church, as this will avoid "inconveniences." But in either case, no matter what terms these apparent materialists use to express the idea that there is nothing in this present life but what we can see and feel, they really believe in something more, although they do not like to admit it because the only evidence they know is the evidence of the senses. Let me now conclude these random remarks by quoting from J. Arthur Thomson, who wrote in "Science and Religion": "Owing to the limitations of our senses we are directly aware of only a small fraction of the

physical changes that go in the world. There is much light that we cannot see: there are many sounds that we cannot hear: there are many movements in which we are implicated, of which our senses give us no direct tidings." And from Emanuel Swedenborg: "Men who are altogether external do not even know what good and truth are: for they fancy all things to be good that belong to the love of self and the love of the world: and all things to be true that favor these loves; not being aware that such goods are evils and such truths falsities." And I conclude by quoting from Marshal Foch, who certainly cannot be set down as one who has not led an active life: "To-day the question can no longer be put. Religion is more and more encompassed by science in its studies; and science, by its successive discoveries, establishes nothing that contradicts religious doctrine. They are two activities that develop without mutual conflict. For all unprejudiced minds they should even find points of agreement in the sincerity of their mutual researches."

Those Infantile Americans. "If America should ever fail," exclaims Harry Emerson Fosdick, "the trouble would not be lack of external legal regulation. The trouble would be lack of moral autonomy—the failure in individual citizens of those motives, sanctions, convictions, faiths and ideals which enable a man to govern himself from within."

A writer in the "Manchester Guardian" tells of a friend in Shanghai, who, after having been thrown much with Americans in China, wrote as follows: "What wonderful people Americans are! You meet one and find him cultured, charming, delightful, almost ferociously up to date. Mention religion, and you might fancy yourself talking to Tom Sawyer's Aunt Polly, to Uncle Silas (who, readers of

'Huckleberry Finn' will remember, 'had a little one-horse leg church down back of the plantation, and never charged nothing for his preaching and was worth it.') or 'them dear people of the Pokeville camp-meeting.' " And this comment is made upon Bruce Barton's book, so popular ("The Man Nobody Knows"), by a writer in the "Christian Century": " 'Jesus was a failure!' cries Mr. Barton in disgust. 'He picked up twelve men from the bottom ranks of business and forged them into an organization that conquered the world.' The picture of Jesus which emerges in Mr. Barton's hand is one of a regular he-man, according to the best conceptions of the modern business executive. . . . He used the market place for his publicity efforts. . . . Jesus knew how to make the front page in a news story." What is there about this sort of thing, a pure (or impure) American product, which makes us wonder how so many can rise to it, and which is so personally offensive to people of taste? It is not either its insincerity or its irreverence, because neither of these things is there—at least not intentionally there in the case of irreverence. Perhaps we can say best that it is due to lack of a sense of form. Form is something which true artists develop very slowly, a lot of them working together to get the best form, just as in Greece the Hermes of Praxiteles represented the best example of form, which many other sculptors had failed to achieve in that degree. In this country, on account of its mixed audiences and polyglot peoples, it is impossible to develop a sense of form on a large scale; thus, to attract the multitude, Billy Sunday and Bruce Barton vaudevillize Christianity. The harm does not come from the substance of what they say or write, but from the fact that they ig-

nore that method which, in the long line of art in writing, insists that form must be developed as a proper vehicle for expression. Thus the national character, deprived of the opportunity to learn what form is (a way of self-discipline), is by so much defeated and left barren.

Sex. I asked one of the most prominent neurologists in America once what part sex occupied in human affairs, including literature and thought, and he replied immediately that there was nothing else. I think he was greatly in error, and I have noticed often that doctors, perhaps more than any other class, are prone to be fanatical on the subject of their own specialty. Alienists are apt to think that everybody is going crazy, just as eye doctors always discover that you cannot live another day without glasses. Sex is largely a matter of economics; that is to say, it is played up by men who make millions in exploiting the sex instinct. The truth is that this sex instinct is subordinate to that spiritual urge which makes people reach out for some ideal. Being thrown back in this upward craving, they take it out in sex, just as drunkards satisfy their cravings with alcohol. Most drunkards have wonderful spiritual insight. Most sex perverts or sex-bound people are highly sensitized. All that does not mean that sex itself is predominant, only that it acts as a ready-to-hand substitute for higher things which may not be attained. It is also interesting to find that among the mystics the sex motive is predominant, but this is not necessarily condemnatory. Benjamin Stolberg in a review of James Leuba's book, "The Psychology of Religious Mysticism," writes: "Mr. Leuba's insistence on the sex-conflict has met with much criticism but, as he points out, not one of the prominent representatives of mysticism

lived a normal married life, and many of the curious phenomena to which great mystics owe in part their fame or notoriety are due to perturbations of the sex function consequent upon its repression. . . . The desire to attract attention and to play a distinguished part is written large in the work not only of Santa Theresa and Madame Guyon but of Francis of Assisi and Ignatius Loyola."

A writer in the "Saturday Review" of London, who visited this country to secure data, especially among the colleges, writes of American youth in the Middle West: "They know all about sex, and they discuss it with a frankness which I believe impossible in similar circles in England. They insist that morality is a tissue of conventions and hardly worth thinking about. As one young graduate of a Middle Western University expressed it to me, 'The Professor of Psychology told me that chastity is only a secondary motive from the idea of property, so it doesn't seem much worth thinking about, does it. . . . Behaviorism, a form of psychology, which seems to explain everything in terms of physiology, removing any obligation for ethical conduct, has developed in many districts into a cult. The sororities and fraternities preach to their adherents the doctrine of self-expression in its widest sense." This is a form of antinomianism to which I have referred elsewhere, but practically it is merely a by-product of the universal craze for irresponsibility which, under the name of freedom, superman, behaviorism, has swept over the country. It is a method of escape from the stern realities of life, a kind of Nietzschean negation, in which murder, rape, theft, indeed all crimes become the order of the day. But those observers who think it is all due to sex are mistaken. Basically, sex

is the nature-craving for offspring, highly jazzed up by trademongers who see the profits in pandering. But that it is something deeper can be illustrated by a first-hand story I heard from one of the members of a certain Greenwich Village self-expression circle. A young girl who was promiscuous was deeply in love with a young man, but refused to let him touch her because she loved him too well, although she was going with others. He was deeply hurt by her refusal, not understanding that higher thing which made her idealize him. Sex undoubtedly colors and permeates all things, but it must be remembered that the great mystics were entirely unacquainted with modern psychology, and knew nothing of the pathological part of their make-up. In going out to achieve mystical union, it was quite natural for them to work through such a strong medium as the sex instinct, particularly when it was repressed. The development of this instinct is undoubtedly due to thought-images, mental eroticisms, for old men who permit themselves these images are notoriously worse than young ones. There is nothing wrong in sex. It becomes wrong only when it is used to undermine character, and this happens when responsibility is weakened. The whole code can be summed up in the statement that we have no right to act in such a manner as to inflict annoyance or pain on others. A large part of the sex stuff is merely a destructive personal selfishness acting in the guise of intellectualism, art, literature. Respectable people, who mind their own business and give the world its character and moral stamina, are held up to scorn. Because, of the world's great geniuses, a few were sex-ridden or racked to pieces by their unfiltered imaginations, it is assumed by any seventeen-year-old boy, who sits

at the feet of James Joyce or Sherwood Anderson, that he has a right to commit any crime in the calendar, merely to achieve his particular form of self-expression.

The Split in Psychology. Modern psychology is going through the same process which we see in all areas of human thought; that is to say, between the material and spiritual. Up to within a comparatively recent period, psychology was based on the consciousness, and was defined as a study of the mind. Little by little, however, certain psychologists broke from this view and leaned more and more to the behaviorist method. The reader is referred to two books, which give the opposite points of view. One is "What is Behaviorism?" by Professor John B. Watson, and the other is "Dynamic Psychology" by Dom Thomas Verner Moore, an eminent Catholic priest, and indorsed by the Roman Catholic Church. In writing for his side, Professor Watson says that "behaviorism has not as yet replaced the older psychology—called *introspective psychology*—of James, Wundt, Kulpe, Titchener, Angell, Judd and McDougall. Possibly the easiest way to bring out the contrast between the old psychology and the new is to say that all schools of psychology except that of behaviorism claim that 'consciousness' is the subject matter of psychology. Behaviorism, on the contrary, holds that the subject matter of human psychology is in the *behavior or activities of the human being.*" Father Moore on the other hand, who is not only a professor of psychology of long standing but as director of the clinic for mental and nervous diseases in Providence Hospital, Washington, has had a long practical experience, declares that Behaviorism has not been able to attain its goal and either predict or control human behavior.

"Whenever one wishes to understand any of the real problems of mental conflict, or penetrate into the real causes of the difficulties of life, one has to obtain introspections from the patient in trouble."

Briefly, the two opposing schools of psychology can be summed up by the old question, "Does the mind control the body or does the body control the mind?" If you believe the first, then you are an introspective psychologist. If you believe the latter, then you are a behaviorist. It is possible, however, to rise above both points of view, as I believe and feel myself to have done, by allowing to each its proper scope. We cannot penetrate into the heart of the mystery merely by classifying and arranging and constantly making new definitions. Neither can we dismiss the results of observation and of research. Here we have the same old game of word-juggling whereby, with a new set of terms, any one can start a new system of thought. The whole matter is made quite simple if you just bear in mind that there is nobody else but YOU or I to know anything at all. As for what I know or do not know, I can call the thing which enables me to determine what I know a consciousness or soul or mind or ego or just plain thinker. Only one thing is of any importance, and that is that I am I, and there are only two things possible for me in any circumstances. I must decide everything for myself, or I must let (apparently) some one else decide it for me. Even here, however, I have to be careful, because I am never quite sure that I do decide anything for myself, and I am never quite sure about others. This pushes me back once more against the "I"—the sole arbiter of everything. Now this "I" has a constant companion which I have come to know as memory, and it is

by means of this memory (which if one likes can be termed a faculty of the soul) that I build up an experience, and from this body of accumulated experience I slowly acquire a kind of working faith. This comes through understanding, as I have shown elsewhere. There are certain things we know are true because we have demonstrated them in our experience. For instance, if you will make a list of the things that happen to you, good and bad, just as a bookkeeper casts up accounts, you will discover that you did not bring any of these things about. They just happened, without any previous creation of yours. Then there are other things that apparently you did bring about. You know that if you do certain things, certain results will follow. But you do not know why you either do or do not do them. You therefore have two choices. One is to believe that there is one infinite God, or Good, from whom come all things. The other is that there is nothing but what you actually feel, see, experience. If you believe the first, and stick to it, little by little your whole life is simplified into this belief, and—while it is of course impossible to understand the infinitude of God—your problem is settled so far as this life is concerned. If on the other hand you accept nothing but the evidence of the senses, then you still do the best you can with what you have. Actually and practically there is not so much difference between these opposite points of view as appears on the surface. The behaviorist and the introspective psychologist are both trying to do the same thing from slightly different angles. Unfortunately, however, the behaviorist school is having a bad influence upon our youth, because, as it deals with material appearances alone, it becomes merely another subtle argument for irresponsibility.

Mature minds can "take in" the sincerity of behaviorist teachers without prejudice, knowing that this is only a phase of the scientific mind. But too many young people are waiting to seize upon any specious argument which will enable them to evade the slow upbuilding of character which is the only thing that can make a real people.

What is Culture? In my disparaging remarks about scholars and book-learning, I may seem to place too little stock in educational processes, or in genuine culture. My position, however, can be amplified in the following manner. An appreciation and right understanding of art (by this I mean particularly paintings and sculpture) is an undoubted evidence of culture. But there are thousands of people who year by year visit European art galleries and "know" pictures, who have no real taste in matters of art. Thus a man may be intimately acquainted with any branch of learning and not have culture. As I have indicated in the case of Mr. Bryan, it shows a very defective form of intelligence on the part of any man who insists on putting forth a propaganda on any controversial subject without knowing its previous history. The more we know of the historical background of the Jews the better are we able to understand the Bible. The more intimate we are with comparative religion, the better we understand our own. It seems to be particularly true here in America that too many people of low intelligence rush forward with theories which they think new, merely because their inexhaustible ignorance of history and philosophy gives them the assurance necessary to exploit themselves. And it is also too true that here they are safe in their assertions, because the particular audiences to whom they appeal are even more ig-

norant than they are. As for myself, I readily disclaim any more intimate knowledge, or any greater learning, than can be obtained in half a lifetime of in many respects wide but hasty reading. My chief claim is, not that I am writing anything that has not been said before, but merely that from a long personal experience with a great variety of minds, plus my own, I have made an attempt to reduce the whole practical problem of life to a working basis, shot through I trust, with an absolute faith in spiritual reality. Just as all real progress must result from a proper union of the deductive and inductive methods (with the deductive method first), so all real culture must result from personal research and study combined with intensive cultivation. Thus from one book may be gained all that is necessary. Culture, as Professor John Dewey suggests, is merely being aware of the laws that govern thought. That is, it is knowing yourself, and this knowing one's self must depend quite largely on a study of the world consciousness; that is to say, of the historical development of the human mind. Self-centered people never can have true culture, because they have limited themselves to their own narrow intellects. And this is true of intellectual people as well as half-wits. Culture is not intellectual, it is not religious, it is the Mind and Spirit working together, forming a Union.

Translations of the Bible. I cannot warm up to translations of the New Testament, although, in some instances I have found them to be useful. They are Weymouth's, Goodspeed's, Ballentine's, Moffat's, and the Twentieth Century, the work of a number of revisers. I believe also the New Testament has been translated by a woman, although I have not seen a copy. I have, however, read Goodspeed's

with great interest. Such a work must of course be considered by itself and not in comparison with the King James text. The claim made for these various translations is that they give a more accurate rendering of the text in disputed cases and also correct many errors in the King James version. That may be so, but I doubt that this is important. I have found Weymouth particularly useful in this respect. Undoubtedly, to read the same thing from another angle may bring out a slightly new meaning; yet after an examination of these various translations over a considerable period of years, I cannot recall any great gains. The reference Bibles generally give disputed meanings, and then again the Greek Testament and the Hebrew dictionaries can always be resorted to even if one is not familiar with either Greek or Hebrew beyond what one has learned at school. The astounding beauty of the King James version renders everything else inconsequential. In Hebrews there is a line WHOM THE LORD LOVETH HE CHASTENETH. In practically all of the translations I have read the word *chasten* is made to read *discipline*, yet, one of the meanings given to it by the philologists is to *instruct*. Now as a matter of fact, when we come to see that God, in this manner, is not intended to punish but more to lead us on by instruction (even though this instruction may often be painful), we begin to get a new slant on this passage. Yet these translators all failed to emphasize this. Numerous other instances of the futility of these translations could be given.

The Hypothesis. In my chapter on the new psychology, and also in other places where I write of Totality or the whole, in contrast to any part, I may be accused of ignoring the great value of the inductive method, and of its historical

importance. Many modern writers have emphasized the great progress made in the advance of knowledge, since Francis Bacon wrote his revolutionary works. What are deduction and induction, and wherein lies the difference between them? Deduction is merely reasoning from the whole to the particular. Its characteristic, writes Buckle ("History of Civilization"), "when applied to branches of knowledge not yet ripe for it, is, that it increases the number of hypotheses from which we reason downwards, and brings into disrepute the slow and patient ascent peculiar to inductive inquiry . . . no one, properly instructed, will deny its immense value. But when it is universally followed, there is imminent danger lest the observation of mere empirical uniformities may be neglected." Nothing could be truer than that, and undoubtedly it was not until Bacon introduced the modern research or inductive method, or at least showed its necessity, that scientific thought came properly into its own. In my statements about the spiritual necessity of beginning with the whole (Perfection, Totality), I take this for granted, but this does not invalidate the principle I advocate. The framework of our thought must be built from material concepts, and the slow and painstaking accumulation of facts must be the basis of scientific progress. Nevertheless, it is still true that the highest ideals, spiritual or scientific, cannot be reached without adhering to the deductive principle, always bearing in mind the inductive (or as I have suggested, keeping one's feet on the ground). The inductive method, as necessary as it is, must ever fail in its conclusions. Thus, as an instance of this futility, I take the case of a single work, "A Bipolar Theory of Living Processes," by Dr. George Washington

Crile and his laboratory co-worker, Amy F. W. Rowland. Having for nine years studied cells, and learning—among a vast number of other things—that every one of the 28,000,000,000,000 (28 trillion) cells in the human body are alike in that each is a tiny cell, the author states: "We concede that our thesis" (What life really is) "has not been finally proven. Final proof is lacking regarding practically every point. We concede that the bipolar theory would fail to explain living processes if any other form of electric energy could be proved to be adapted to construct and operate an organism which is identical with or analagous to that of the human organism." In other words, nothing has happened.

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